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# ATALANTA



Edited by

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*L. Alma Tadema, R.A.*

### THE FRIGIDARIUM.

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OCTOBER 1893 TO SEPTEMBER 1894.



PUBLISHED AT

5A, PATERNOSTER ROW.

EDITED BY

28, NEW BRIDGE STREET,  
LONDON.





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SIR  
Robert's



Fortune.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

“WE are to see each other no more.”

These words were breathed rather than spoken in the dim recess of a window, hidden behind ample curtains; the deep recess in which the window was set leaving room enough for two figures standing close together. Without was a misty night, whitened rather than lighted, by a pale moon.

“Who says so?”

“Alas! my uncle,” said the white figure, which looked misty, like the night, in undistinguishable whiteness amid the darkness round.

The other figure was less distinguishable still, no more than a faint solidity in the atmosphere, but from it came a deeper whisper, the low sound of a man’s voice—“Your uncle!” it said.

There was character in the voices enough to throw some light upon the speakers, even though they were unseen. The woman’s had a faint accentuation of feeling, not of anxiety, yet half defiance and half appeal. It seemed to announce a fact unchangeable, yet look and hope for a contradiction. The man’s had a tone of acceptance and dismay. The fiat which had gone forth was

more real to him than to her, though she was in the position of asserting, and he of opposing it.

“Yes,” she said, “Ronald, my uncle—who has the strings of the purse and everything else in his hands—”

There was a moment’s pause, and then he said—“How does he mean to manage that?”

“I am to be sent off to-morrow—it’s all settled—and if I had not contrived to get out to-night, you would never have known.”

“But where? It all depends upon that,” he said, with a little impatience.

“To Dalrugas,” she answered with a sigh: and then—“It is miles and miles from anywhere—a moor and a lodge, and not even a cottage near. Dougal and his wife live there, and take care of the place: not a soul can come near it—it is the end of the world. Oh, Ronald, what shall I do? what shall I do?”

Once more in the passionate distress of the tone there was an appeal, and a sort of feverish hope.

“We must think; we must think,” he said.

“What will thinking do? It will not change my uncle’s heart, nor the distance, nor the dreadful solitude. What does he care if it kills me?—or anybody?” The last words came from her with

a shriller tone of misery, as if it had become too much to bear.

"Hush, hush, for heaven's sake, they will hear you!" he said.

On the other side of the curtain there was a merry crowd in full career of a reel, which in those days had not gone out of fashion as now. The wild measure of the music, now quickening to lightning speed, now dropping to sedate motion, with the feet of the dancers keeping time, filled the atmosphere—a shriek would scarcely have been heard above that mirthful din.

"Oh, why do you tell me to hush?" cried the girl impetuously. "Why should I mind who hears? It is not for duty or love that I obey him, but only because he has the money. Am I caring for his money? I could get my own living: it would not want much. Why do I let him do what he likes with me?"

"My darling," said the man's voice, anxiously. "don't do anything rash, for God's sake! Think of our future. To displease him, to rebel, would spoil everything. I see hope in the loneliness, for my part. Be patient, be patient, and let me work it out."

"Oh, your working out!" she cried. "What good has it done? I would cut the knot. It would be strange if we two could not get enough to live upon—or myself, if you are afraid."

He soothed her, coming closer, till the dark shadow and the white one seemed but one, and murmured caressing words in her ears—"Let us wait till the case is desperate, Lily: it is not desperate yet. I see chances in the moor and the wilderness. He is playing into our hands if he only knew it. Don't, don't spoil everything by your impatience! Leave it to me, and you'll see good will come out of it."

"I would rather take it into my own hands," she cried.

"No, dearest, no! I see, I see all sorts of good in it. Go quite cheerfully as if you were pleased. No, your own way is best—don't let us awake any suspicions—go as if you were breaking your heart."

"There will be no feigning in that," she said; "I shall be breaking my heart."

"For a moment," he said. "Weeping endureth for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

"Don't, Ronald! I can't bear to hear you quoting Scripture."

"Why not? I am not the devil, I hope," he said, with a low laugh.

There was a question in the girl's hot, impatient heart, and then a quick revulsion of feeling. "I don't know what to do, or to think; I feel as if I could not bear it," she said, the quick tears dropping from her eyes.

He wiped them tenderly away with the flourish of a white handkerchief in the dark. "Trust to me," he said soothingly. "Be sure it is for our good, this. Listen, they are calling for you, Lily."

"Oh, what do I care? How can I go among them all, and dance as if I were as gay as the rest, when my heart is broken?"

"Not so badly broken but that it will mend," he whispered, as with a clever swift movement he put aside the curtain, and led her through. He was so clever: where any other man would have been lost in perplexity, or even despair, Ronald Lumsden always saw a way through. He was never at a loss for an expedient: even that way of getting back to the room out of the shadow of the curtains no one could have performed so easily, so naturally as he did. He met and entered into the procession of dancers going out of the room after the exertions of that reel, as if he and his partner formed part of it, and had been dancing too. People did not "sit out" in those days, and Ronald was famous for his skill in the national dance. Nobody doubted that he had been exerting himself with the rest. Lily was half English—that is, she had been sent to England for part of her education, and so far as reels were concerned, had lost some of her native skill, and was not so clever. She was not, indeed, supposed to be clever at all, though very nice, and pretty enough, and an heiress—at least, she was likely to be an heiress, if she continued to please her uncle, who was not an easy man to please, and exacted absolute obedience. There were people who shook their heads over her chances, declaring that flesh and blood could not stand Sir Robert Ramsay's moods: but up to this time, Lily had been more or less successful, and the stake being so great, she had, people said, "every encouragement" to persevere.

But Lily was by no means so strong as her

lover, who joined the throng as if he had formed part of it, with a perfect air of enjoyment and light-heartedness. Lily could not look happy. It may be said that in his repeated assurance that all would be right, and that he would find a way out of it, she ought to have taken comfort, feeling in that a pledge of his fidelity and steadiness to his love. But there was something in this readiness of resource which discouraged, she could not have told why, instead of making her happy. It would have been so much simpler, so much more satisfactory, to have given up all thoughts of Sir Robert's money, and trusted to Providence and their own exertions to bring them through. Lily felt that she could make any sacrifice, live upon nothing, live anywhere, work her fingers to the bone, only to be independent, to be free of the bondage of the uncle, and the consciousness that it was not for love, but for his money, that she had to accept all his caprices, and yield him obedience. If Ronald would but have yielded, if he would have been imprudent as so many young men were, how thankful she would have been! She would have been content with the poorest living anywhere, to be free, to be with him, whom she loved. She would have undertaken the conduct of their little *ménage* herself, without even thinking of servants—she would have cooked for him, cleaned the house for him, shrunk from nothing. But that, alas, was not Ronald's way of looking at the matter. He believed in keeping up appearances, in being rich at almost any cost, and, at best, in looking rich if he were not really so; and, above all and beyond all, in keeping well with the uncle, and retaining the fortune. He would not have any doubt thrown on the necessity of that. He was confident of his own powers of cheating the uncle, and managing so that Lily should have all she wanted, in spite of him, by throwing dust in his eyes. But Lily's soul revolted against throwing dust in any one's eyes. This was the great difference between them. I do not say that there was any great sin in circumventing a harsh old man, who never paused to think what he was doing, or admitted a question as to whether he was or was not absolutely in the right. He was one of the men who always know themselves to be absolutely right: therefore he was, as may be said, fair game. But Lily did not like it. She would have liked a lover who said—"Never mind,

we shall be happy without him and his fortune." She had tried everything she knew to bring young Lumsden to this point. But she was not able to do so: his opinion was that everything must be done to preserve the fortune, and that, however hard it might be, there was nothing so hard but that it must be done to humour old Sir Robert, to prevent him from cutting his niece out of his will. Was not this right? was it not prudent, wise, the best thing? If he, an advocate without a fee, a briefless barrister, living as best he could on chance windfalls and bits of journalism, had been as bold as she desired, and carried her off from the house in Moray Place to some garret of his own up among the roofs, would not everybody have said that he had taken advantage of her youth and inexperience, and deprived her of all the comforts and luxuries she was used to? That Lily cared nothing for those luxuries, and that she was of the mettle to adapt herself to any circumstances, so long as she had somebody to love and who loved her, was not a thing to reckon with public opinion about: and, indeed, Ronald Lumsden would have thought himself quite unjustified in reckoning with it at all. To tell the truth, he had no desire on his own part to give up such modest luxuries for himself as were to be had.

The day of clubs was not yet, at least in Edinburgh, to make life easy for young men, but yet to get along, as he was doing precariously, was easier for one than it would be for two. Even Lily, all hot for sacrifice and for ministering with her own hands to all the needs of life, had never contemplated the idea of doing without Robina, her maid, who had been with her so many years that it was impossible for either of them to realise what life would be if they were separated. Even if it should be a necessary reality, Robina was included as a matter of course. How it might be that Lily should require to scrub, and clean, and cook with her own hands, while she was attended by a lady's maid, was a thing she had never reasoned out. You may think that a lady's maid would probably be of less use than her mistress, had such service been necessary; but this was not Robina's case, who was a very capable person all round, and prided herself on being able to "turn her hand" to anything. But then a runaway match was the last thing that was in Lumsden's thoughts.

It was a dance which everybody enjoyed that

evening, in the big, old-fashioned rooms in George Square. George Square has fallen out of knowledge in all the expansions of new Edinburgh, the Edinburgh that lies on the other side of the valley, and dates no farther back than last century. It also is of last century, but earlier than the Moray Places and Crescents: far earlier than the last developments, the Belgravia of the town. There Sir Walter once lived, in, I think, his father's house: and these substantial, ample, homely houses, were the first out-let of the well-to-do, the upper classes of Edinburgh, out of the closes and high-up apartments, approached through the atrocities of a common stair, in which so refined and luxurious a sybarite as Lawyer Pleydell still lived in Sir Walter's own time. These mansions are severely plain outside: "undemonstrative," as Scotch pride arrogantly declares itself to be, aping humility with a pretence to which I, for one, feel disposed to allow no quarter: but they are large and pleasant inside, and the big square rooms the very thing to dance in or to feast in. They were full of a happy crowd, bright in colour and lively in movement, with a larger share of golden hair and rosy cheeks than is to be seen in most assemblies, and, perhaps, a greater freedom of laughter and talk than would have been appropriate to a solemn ball in other localities. For Edinburgh was not so large then as now, and they all knew each other, and called each other by their Christian names—boy and girl alike: with a general sense of fraternity modified by almost as many love affairs as there were pairs of boys and girls present. There were mothers and aunts all round the wide walls, but this did not subdue the hilarity of the young ones, who knew each other's mothers and aunts almost as well as they knew their own, and counted upon their indulgence. Lily Ramsay was almost the only girl who had nobody of her own to turn to: but this only made her the more protected and surrounded, everybody feeling that the motherless girl had a special claim. They were by no means angels, these old-fashioned Edinburgh folk: sharper tongues could not be than were to be found among them, or more wicked wits; but there was a great deal of kindness under the terrible turbans which crowned the heads of the elder ladies and the scarves which fell from their bare shoulders, and they all knew everyone, and everyone's father and mother for generations back. Their dress was queer, or rather

I should have said it was queer before the present revival of the early Victorian or late Georgian style began. They wore puffed-out sleeves, with small feather pillows in them to keep them inflated; they had bare shoulders and ringlets: they had scarves of lace or silk, carefully disposed so as not to cover anything, but considered very classical and graceful, drawn in over the elbows, by people who knew how to wear them, making manifest the slender waist (or often the outlines of a waist which had ceased to be slender,) behind. And they had, as has been said, a dreadful particular, which it is to be hoped the blind fury of fashion will not bring up again—turbans upon their heads. Turbans such as no Indian or Bedouin ever wore, of all colours and every kind of savage decoration, such as may be seen in pictures of that alarming age.

When young Lumsden left his Lily, it was in the midst of a group of girls collected together in the interval between two dances, lamenting that the programme was nearly exhausted, and that mamma had made a point of not staying later than three o'clock. "Because it disturbs papa!" said one of them indignantly, "though we all know he would go on snoring if the castle rock were to fall!" They all said papa and mamma in those days.

"But mamma says there are so many parties going," said another: "a ball for almost every night next week: and what are we to do for dresses? tarlatan's in rags with two, and even a silk slip is shameful to look at at the end of a week."

"Lily has nothing to do but to get another whenever she wants it," said Jeanie Scott.

"And throw away the old ones, she's such a grand lady," said Maggie Lauder.

"Ho'd all your tongues," said Bella Rutherford, "it does her this good, that she thinks less about it than any of us."

"She has other things to think of," cried another: and there was a laugh and a general chorus, "So have we all. But, Lily! is Sir Robert as dour as ever?" one of the rosy creatures cried.

"I don't think I am going to any more of your balls," said Lily: "I'm tired of dancing. We just dance, dance, and think of nothing else."

"What else should we think about at our age?" said Mary Bell, opening wide a pair of round blue eyes.

"We'll have plenty other things to think about, mamma says, and that soon enough," said Alison



Murray, who was just going to be married, with a sigh. "But there's the music striking up again, and who's my partner? for I'm sure I don't remember whether it's Alick Scott, or Johnnie Beatoun, or Bob Murray. Oh! is it you, Bob?" she said, with relief, putting her hand upon an outstretched arm. They were almost all in a similar perplexity, except, indeed, such as had their own special partner waiting. Lily was almost glad that it was not Ronald but a big young Macgregor who led her off to the top of the room to a sedate quadrille. The waltz existed in those days, but it was still an indulgence, and looked upon with but scant favour by the mothers. The elder folks were scandalized by the close contact, and even the girls liked best that it should be an accepted lover, or at the least, a brother or cousin whose arm encircled their waist. So they still preferred dances in which there were "figures," and took their pleasure occasionally in a riotous "Lancers" or a merry reel, with great relief. Lily was young enough to forget herself and her troubles, even in the slow movement of the quadrilles, with everybody else round chattering and beaming and forgetting when it was their turn to dance. But she said to herself that it was the last. Of all these dances of which they spoke she would see none. When the others gathered, delighted to enjoy themselves, she would be gazing across the dark moor, hearing nothing but the hum of insects and the cry of the curlew, or perhaps, a watchful blackbird in the little clump of trees. Well! for to-night she would forget.

I need not say it was Lumsden who saw her to her own door on the other side of the square. No one there would have been such a spoil-sport as to interfere with his right, whatever old Sir Robert might say. They stole out in a lull of the leave-taking, when the most of the people were gone, and others lingered for just this "one more" for which the girls pleaded. The misty moonlight filled the square, and made all the waiting carriages look like ghostly equipages bent upon some mystic journey in the middle of the night. They paused at the corner of the square, where the road led down to the pleasant Meadows, all white and indefinite in the mist, spreading out into the distance. Lumsden would fain have drawn her away into a little further discussion, wandering under the trees, where they would have met nobody at that hour; but Lily was not bold enough to walk in the

Meadows between two and three in the morning. She was willing, however, to walk up and down a little on the other side of the square before she said good-night. Nobody saw them there, except some of the coachmen on the boxes, who were too sleepy to mind who passed, and Robina, who had silently opened the door and was waiting for her mistress. Robina was several years older than Lily, and had relinquished all thoughts of a sweetheart in her own person. She stood concealing herself in the doorway, ready, if any sound should be made within which denoted wakefulness on the part of Sir Robert, to snatch her young lady even from her lover's arms; and watching, with very mingled feelings, the pair half seen—the white figure congenial to the moonlight and the dark one just visible, like a pop to a flower. "Lily's her name and Lily's her nature," said Robina to herself, with a little moisture in her kind eyes; "but, oh! is he worthy of her, is he worthy of her?" This was too deep a question to be solved by anything but time and proof, which are the last things to satisfy the heart. At last there was a lingering parting, and Lily stole in, in her white wraps, all white from top to toe, into the dark and silent house.

## CHAPTER II.

LILY'S room was faintly illuminated by a couple of candles, which, as it was a large room with gloomy furniture, made little more than darkness visible, except about the table on which they stood, the white cover of which, and the dressing glass that stood upon it, diffused the light a little. It was not one of those dainty chambers in which our Lilys of the present day are housed. One side of the room was occupied by a large wardrobe of almost black mahogany, polished and gleaming with many years' manipulation, but out of reach of these little lights. The bed was a large four-post bed, which once had been hung with those moreen curtains, which were the triumph of the bad taste of our fathers, and had their appropriate accompaniment in black hair-cloth sofas and chairs. Lily had been allowed to substitute for the moreen white dimity, which was almost as bad, and hung stiff as a board from the valance ornamented with bobs of cotton tassels. She could not help it if that was the best that could be

done in her day. Everything, except the bed, was dark, and the distance of the large room was black as night, except for the relief of an open door into a small dressing-room which Robina occupied, and in which a weird little dip candle with a long wick unsnuffed was burning feebly. Nobody can imagine now-a-days what it was to have candles which required snuffing, and which, if not attended to, soon began to bend and topple over with a small red column of consumed wick, in the midst of a black and smoking crust. A silver snuffer tray is quite a pretty article now-a-days, and proves that its possessor had a grandfather: but then! The candles on the dressing-table, however, were carefully snuffed, and burnt as brightly as was possible for them while Robina took off her young mistress' great white Indian mantle, with its silken embroideries, and undid her little pearl necklace. Lily had the milk-white skin of a Scotch girl, and the rose-tints: but she was brown in hair and eyes, as most people are in all countries, and had no glow of golden hair about her. She was tired and pale that night, and the tears were very near her eyes.

"Ye've been dancing more than ye should: these waltzes and new-fangled things are real exhaustin'," Robina said.

"I have been dancing very little," said Lily: "my heart was too heavy. How can you dance when you have got your sentence in your pocket, and the police coming for you to haul you away to the Grassmarket by skreigh of day?"

"Hoot, away with ye," cried Robina, "what nonsense are ye talking? My bonnie dear, ye'll dance many a night yet at a' the assemblies, and go in on your ain man's arm——"

"It's you that's talking nonsense now. On whose arm? Have we not got our sentence, you and me, to be banished to Dalrugas to-morrow, and never to come back—unless——"

"Ay, Miss Lily, unless!—but that's a big word."

"It is, perhaps, a big word: but it cannot touch me, that am not of the kind that breaks my word or changes my mind," said Lily, raising her head with a gesture full of pride.

"Oh, Miss Lily, my dear! I ken what the Ramsays are!" cried the faithful maid, "but there might be two meanings till it," and she breathed a half sigh over her young mistress's head.

"You think, I know—and maybe I once

thought too: but you may dismiss that from your mind as I do," said the girl with a shake of the head as if she were shaking something off. And then she added, clasping her hands together, "Oh, if I were strong enough just to say, 'I am not caring about your money. I am not afraid to be poor. I can work for my own living, and you can give your siller where you please!' Oh, Beenie, that is what I want to say!"

"No, my darlin', no: you must not say that. Oh, you must not say that!" Robina cried.

"And why? I must not do this or the other, and who are you that dares to say so? I am my mother's daughter, as well as my father's, and if that's not as good blood, it has a better heart. I might go there—they would not refuse me."

"Without a penny," said Robina. "Can you think o't, Miss Lily? And is that no banishment too?"

Lily rose from her chair, shaking herself free from her maid, with her pretty hair all hanging about her shoulders. It was pretty hair, though it was brown like everybody else's, full of incipient curl, the crispness yet softness of much life. She shook it about her with her rapid movement, bringing out all the undertones of colour, and its wavy freedom give an additional sparkle to her eyes and animation to her look. "Without a penny!" she cried. "And who is caring about your pennies?—you and the like of you, but not me, Beenie—not me! What do I care for the money, the filthy siller, the pound notes, all black with the hands they've come through! Am I minding about the grand dinners that are never done, and the parties, where you never see those you want to see, and the balls, where——. Just a little cottage, a drink of milk, and a piece of cake off the girdle, and plenty to do, it's that that would please me!"

"Oh, my bonnie Miss Lily!" was all that Beenie said.

"And when I see," said the girl, pacing up and down the room, her hair swinging about her shoulders, her white undergarments all afloat about her in the energy of her movements, "that other folk think of that first. Whatever you do, you must not risk your fortune. Whatever you have to bear, you must not offend your uncle, for he has the purse strings in his hand. Oh, my uncle, my uncle! It's not," she cried, "that I

wouldn't be fond of him if he would let me, and care for what he said, and do what he wanted as far as I was able: but his money! I wish—oh, I wish his money—his money—was all at the bottom of the sea!"

"Whisht! whisht!" cried Beenie, with a movement of horror, "oh, but that's a dreadful wish. You would, maybe, no like it yourself, Miss Lily, for all you think now; but what would auld Sir Robert be without his money? Instead of a grand gentleman, as he is, he would just be a miserable auld man. He couldna bide it: he would be shootin' himself or something terrible. His fine dinners and his house, and his made dishes and his wine that costs as much as would keep twa-three honest families! Oh, ye dinna mean it, ye dinna mean it, Miss Lily! You dinna ken what you are saying; ye wouldna like it yoursel, and oh, to think o' him."

Lily threw herself down in the big chair, which rose above her head with its high back, and brought out all her whiteness against its sober cover. She was silenced—obviously by the thought thus suggested of Sir Robert as a poor man, which was an absurdity—and perhaps secretly, in that innermost seclusion of the heart, which even its possessor does not always realize, by a faint chill of wonder whether she would indeed and really like to be poor, as she protested she should. It was quite true that a drink of milk and a piece of oatcake appeared to her as much nourishment as any person of refinement need care for. In the novels of her day, which always affect the young mind, all the heroines lived upon such fare, and were much superior to beef and mutton. But there were undoubtedly other things—Robina, for instance; although no thought of parting from Robina had ever crossed Lily's mind, as a necessary part of poverty. But she was silenced by these thoughts. She had not indeed ever confessed in so many words even to Robina, scarcely to herself, that it was Ronald who cared for the money, and that it was the want of any impulse on his part to do without it that carried so keen a pang to her heart. Had he cried, "A fig for the money," then it might have been her part to temporise and be prudent. The impetuosity, the recklessness, should not, she felt, be on her side.

It was on the very next day that her decision was to be made—and it had not been till all other

means had failed that Sir Robert had thus put the matter to the touch. He had opposed her in many gentler ways before it came to that. Sir Robert was not a brute or a tyrant—very far from it. He was an old gentleman of fine manners, pluming himself on his successes with "the other sex," and treating all women with a superfine courtesy, which only one here and there divined to conceal contempt. Few men—one may say with confidence, no elderly man without wife or daughters—has much respect for women in general. It is curious, it is to some degree reciprocal, it is of course always subject to personal exceptions: yet it is the rule between the two sections of humanity which nevertheless have to live in such intimate intercourse with each other. In an old bachelor like Sir Robert, and one too who was conscious of having imposed upon many women, this prepossession was more strong than among men of more natural relationships. And Lily, who was only his niece, and had not lived with him until very lately, had not overcome all prejudices in his mind, as it is sometimes given to a daughter to do. He had thought first that he could easily separate her from the young man who did not please him, and bestow her, as he had a right to bestow his probable heiress, on whom he pleased. When this proved ineffectual, he cursed her obstinacy, but reflected that it was a feature in women, and, therefore, nothing to be surprised at. They were always taken in by fictitious qualities—who could know it better than he? and considered it a glory to stick to a suitor unpalatable to their belongings. And then he had threatened her with the loss of the fortune which she had been brought up to expect. "See if this fine fellow you think so much of will have you without your money," he said. Lily had never in so many words put Lumsden to the trial, never proposed to him to defy Sir Robert; but she had made many an attempt to discover his thoughts, and even to push him to this rash solution, and, with an ache at her heart, had felt that there was at least a doubt whether the fine fellow would think so much of her if she were penniless. She had never put it to the test, partly because she dared not, though she had not been able to refrain from an occasional burst of defiance and hot entreaty to Sir Robert to keep his money to himself. And now she was to decide for herself—to give Ronald over for ever,

or to give over Edinburgh and the society in which she might meet him, and keep her love at the cost of martyrdom in her uncle's lonely shooting box on the moors. There was, of course, a second alternative—that which she had so often thought of: to refuse, to leave Sir Robert's house, to seek refuge in some cottage, to live on milk and oatcake, and provide for herself. If the alternative had been to run away with her lover, to be married to him in humility and poverty, to keep his house and cook his dinners, and iron his linen, Lily would not have hesitated for a moment. But he had not asked her to do this—had not dreamt of it, it seemed; and to run away alone and work for herself would be, Lily felt, to expose him to much animadversion as well as herself: and, most of all, it would betray fully to herself and to her uncle, with that sneer on his face, the certainty that Ronald would not risk having her without her money, that discovery which she held at arm's length and would not consent to make herself sure of. All these thoughts were tumultuous in her mind as she opened her eyes to the light of a new day. This was the final moment; the turning point of her life. She thought at first when she woke that it was still the same misty moonlight on which she had shut her eyes, and that there must still be some hours between her and the day. But it was only an easterly haar with which the air was full—a state of atmosphere not unknown in Edinburgh, and which wraps the landscape in a blinding shroud as of white wool, obliterating every feature in a place which has so many. Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Craigs and the Castle rock had all disappeared in it, from those who were in a position to see them: and here, in George Square, even the brown houses opposite had gone out of sight, and the trees in the garden loomed dimly like ghosts, a branch thrust out here and there. Lily asked herself, was it still night? And then her mind awoke to a state of the atmosphere—not at all unusual—and a sense that the moment of her fate had arrived, and that everything must be settled for her for good or for evil this day.

She was very quiet, and said scarcely anything even to Robina, who dressed her young mistress with the greatest care, bringing out a dress of which Sir Robert had expressed his approval, without consulting Lily, who indeed paid little attention to this important matter. Considering

the visions of poverty and independence that ran in her mind, it was wonderful how peaceably she resigned herself to Robina's administration. Sometimes, when a fit of that independence seized her, she would push Robina away and do everything for herself. Beenie much exaggerated the misfortunes of the result in such moments. "Her hair just a' come down tumbling about her shoulders in five minutes," she said, which was not true: though Lily did not deny that she was not equal to the elaborate braids which were in fashion at the moment, and could not herself plait her hair in anything more than three strands, while Beenie was capable of seven, or any number more.

But to-day she was quite passive, and took no interest in her appearance. Her hair was dressed in a sort of coronet, which was a mode only used on grand occasions. Ordinarily it was spread over the back of the head in woven coils and circles. There was not anything extraordinary in Lily's beauty. It was the beauty of youth, and freshness, and health, a good complexion, good eyes, and features not much to speak of. People did not follow her through the streets, nor stand aside to make way for her when she entered a room. In Edinburgh there were hundreds as pretty as she: and yet, when all was said, she was a pretty creature, good enough and fair enough to be a delight and pride to anyone who loved her. She had innumerable faults, but she was all the sweeter for them, and impulses of temper, swift wrath, and indignation, and impatience, which proved her to be anything but perfect. Sometimes she would take you up at a word and misinterpret you altogether. In all things she was apt to be too quick, to run away with a meaning before you, if you were of slow movement, had got it half expressed. And this and many other things about her were highly provoking, and called forth answering impatience from others. But for all this she was a very lovable, and, as other girls said, nice, girl. She raised no jealousies; she entertained no spites. She was always natural and spontaneous, and did nothing from calculation, not even so much as the putting on of a dress. It did not occur to her even to think, to inquire whether she was looking her best when the hour had come at which she was to go to Sir Robert. Robina took her by the shoulders and turned her slowly round before the glass; but Lily did not



know why. She gave her faithful servant a faint smile over her own shoulder in the mirror, but it did not enter into her mind that it was expedient to look her best when she went downstairs to her uncle. If any one had put it into words she would have asked what did he care? Would he so much as notice her dress? It was ridiculous to think of such a thing, an old man like Sir Robert, with his head full of different matters. Thus, without any thought on that subject, she went slowly downstairs—not flying, as was her wont—very sedately, as if she were counting every step; for was it not her fate and Ronald's which was to be settled to-day?

### CHAPTER III.

"So you are there, Lily," Sir Robert said.

"Yes, uncle, I am here."

"There is one thing about you," he said, with a laugh, "you never shirk. Now, judicious shirking is not a bad thing. I might have forgotten all about it—"

"But I couldn't forget," said Lily, firmly. These words, however, roused her to sudden self reproach. If she had not been so exact, perhaps the crisis might have been tided over and nothing happened. It was just like her! Supposing her little affairs were of more importance than anything else in the world! This roused her from the half passive condition in which she had spent the morning, the feeling that everything depended on her uncle, and nothing on herself.

"Now that you are here," he said, not at all unkindly, "you may as well sit down. While you stand there I feel that you have come to scold me for some fault of mine, which is a reversal of the just position, don't you think?"

"No, uncle," replied Lily, "of course I have not come to scold you, that would be ridiculous: but I am not come to be scolded either, for I have not done anything wrong."

"We'll come to that presently. Sit down, sit down," he said, with impatience. Lily placed herself on the chair he pushed towards her, and then there was a moment's silence. Sir Robert was an old man (in Lily's opinion) and she was a young girl, but they were antagonists not badly matched, and he had a certain respect for the

pluck and firmness of this little person who was not afraid of him. They were indeed so evenly matched, that there ensued a little pause as they both looked at each other in the milky white daylight, full of mist and cold, which filled the great windows. Sir Robert had a fire, though fires had been given up in the house. It burned with a little red point, sultry and smouldering, as fires have a way of doing in summer. The room was large and sombre, with pale green walls hung with some full length portraits, the furniture all large, heavy and dark. A white bust of himself stood stern upon a black pedestal in a corner—so white, that amid all the sober lines of the room, it caught the eye constantly. And Sir Robert was not a handsome man. His features were blunt and his air homely, his head was not adapted for marble. In that hard material it looked frowning, severe, and merciless. The bust had lived in this room longer than Sir Robert had done, and Lily had derived her first impressions of him from its unyielding face. The irregularities of the real countenance leant to humour and a shrewdness which was not unkindly; but there was no relenting in the marble head.

"Well," he said at last, "now we've met to have it out, Lily: you take me at my word, and it is best so. How old are you now?"

"I don't see," said Lily, breathlessly, "what that can have to do with it, uncle! but I'm twenty-two—or, at least, I shall be on the 20th of August, and that is not far away."

"No, it is not far away. Twenty-two—and I am—well, sixty-two we may say, with allowances. That is a great difference between people that meet to discuss an important question—on quite an equal footing, Lily, as you suppose."

"I never pretended—to be your equal, uncle!"

"No, I don't suppose so—not in words, not in experience, and such like—but in intention and all that, and in knowing what suits yourself."

Lily made no reply, but she looked at him—silent, not yielding—tapping her foot unconsciously on the carpet, nervous, yet firm, not disposed to give way a jot, though she recognised a certain truth in what he said.

"This gives you, you must see, a certain advantage to begin with," said Sir Robert, "for you are firmly fixed upon one thing, whatever I say or any one—and determined not to budge from your

position: whereas I am quite willing to hear reason, if there is any reason to show."

"Uncle!" Lily said—and then closed her lips and returned to her silence. It was hard for her to keep silent with her disposition, and yet she suddenly perceived with one of those flashes of understanding which sometimes came to her, that silence could not be contraverted, whereas words under Sir Robert's skilful attack would probably topple over at once, like a house of cards.

"Well?" he said. While she, poor child, was panting and breathless, he was quite cool and collected. At present he rather enjoyed the sight of the little thing's tricks and devices, and was amused to watch how far her natural skill, and that intuitive cunning which such a man believes every woman to possess, would carry her. He was a little provoked that she did not follow that impetuous exclamation—"Uncle!"—with anything more.

"Well?" he repeated, wooing her, as he hoped, to destruction, "What more? Unless you state your case, how am I to find out whether there is any justice in it or not?"

"Uncle," said Lily, "I did not come to state my case, which would not become me. I came because you objected to me, to hear what you wanted me to do."

"By Jove!" said Sir Robert, with a laugh—and then he added, "To be so young you are a very cool hand, my dear."

"How am I a cool hand? I am not cool at all. I am very anxious: it does not matter much to you, uncle Robert, what you do with me: but," said Lily, tears springing to her eyes, "it will matter a great deal to me."

"You little ——!" He could not find an epithet that suited, so left the adjective by itself, in sheer disability to express himself. He would have said hussy had he been an Englishman. He was tempted to say cutty, being a Scot—innocent epithets enough, both, but sufficient to make that little ——! flare up. "You mean," he said, "I suppose, that you have nothing to do with it, and that the whole affair is in my hands."

"Yes, uncle, I think it is," said Lily, very sedately.

He looked at her again with another ejaculation on his lips, and then he laughed.

"Well, my dear," he said, "if that is the case,

we can make short work of it—as you are in such a submissive frame of mind and have no will or intentions on your own part."

Here Lily's impatient spirit got the better of the hasty impulse of policy which she had taken up by sudden inspiration. "I never said that," she cried.

"Then you will be so good as to explain to me what you did say—or rather what you meant, which is more important still," Sir Robert said.

"I meant—just what I have always meant," said Lily, drawing back her chair a little and fixing her eyes upon her foot which beat the floor with a nervous movement.

"And what is that?" he asked.

Lily drew back a little more, her foot ceased to tap, her hands clasped each other. She looked up into his face with half reproachful eyes full of meaning. "Oh, uncle Robert, you know!"

Sir Robert jumped up from his chair, and then sat down again. Demonstrations of wrath were of no use. He felt inclined to cry, "You little cutty!" again, but did not. He puffed out a quick breath, which was a sign of great impatience yet self-repression. "You mean, I suppose, that things are exactly as they were—that you mean to pay no attention to my representations, that you choose your own will above mine—notwithstanding that I have complete power over you, and can do with you what I will?"

"Nobody can do that," said Lily, only half aloud. "I am not a doll," she said, "uncle Robert. You have the power—so that I don't like to disobey you."

"But do it all the same," he cried.

"Not if I can help it. I would like to do it. I would like to be independent. It seems dreadful that one should be obliged to do, not what one wishes, but what another person wills. But you have the power—"

"Of the ways and means," he said; "I have the purse-strings in my hand."

It was Lily's turn now to start to her feet. "Oh how mean of you, how base of you," she said. "You, a great man and a soldier, and me only a girl. To threaten me with your purse-strings! As if I cared for your purse-strings. Give it all away from me; give it all—that's what I should like best. I will go away with Beenie, and we'll sew, or do something else for our living. I'm very fond of

poultry, I could be a henwife; or there are many other things that I could do. Give it all away! Tie them up tight. I just hate your money and your purse strings. I wish they were all at the bottom of the sea."

"You would find things very different if they were, I can tell you," he said, with a snort.

"Oh yes, very different. I would be free. I would take my own way. I would have nobody to tyrannise over me. Oh, uncle! forgive me! forgive me! I did not mean to say that! If you were poor I would take care of you. I would remember you were next to my father, and I would do anything you could say."

He kept his eyes fixed on her as she stood thus, defiant yet compunctious before him. "I don't doubt for a moment you would do everything that was most senseless and imprudent," he said.

Then Lily dropped into her chair and cried a little—partly that she could not help it, partly that it was a weapon of war like another—and gained a little time. But Sir Robert was not moved by her crying; she had not, indeed, expected that he would be.

"I don't see what all this has to do with it," he said. "Consider this passage of arms over, and let us get to business, Lily. It was necessary there should be a flash in the pan to begin."

Lily dried her eyes; she set her little mouth much as Sir Robert set his, and then said in a small voice, "I am quite ready, Uncle Robert;" looking not unlike the bust as she did so. He did not look at all like the bust, for there was a great deal of humour in his face. He thought he saw through all this little flash in the pan, and that it had been intended from the beginning as a preface of operations and by way of subduing him to her will. In all of which he was quite wrong.

"I am glad to hear it, Lily. Now I want you to be reasonable: the thunder is over and the air is clearer. You want to marry a man of whom I don't approve."

"One word," she said, with great dignity. "I am waiting to marry—nobody. There is plenty of time."

"I accept the correction. You want to carry on a love affair which you prefer at this moment. It is more fun than marrying, and in that way you get all the advantages I can give you, and the advantage of a lover's attentions into the bargain. I

congratulate you, my dear, on making the best, as the preacher says, of both worlds."

Lily flushed and clasped her hands together, and there came from her expanded nostrils what in Sir Robert's case we have called a snort of passion. Lily's nostrils were small and pretty, and delicate. This was a puff of heated breath, and no more.

"Eh?" he said; but she mastered herself and said nothing, which made it more difficult for him to go on. Finally, however, he resumed.

"You think," he said, "that it will be more difficult for me to restrain you if you or your lover have no immediate intention of marrying. And probably he, for I do him the justice to say he is a very acute fellow, sees the advantage of that. But it will not do for me. I must have certainty one way or another. I am not going to give the comfort of my life over into your silly hands. No, I don't even say that you are sillier than most of your age, on the contrary: but I don't mean," he added deliberately, "to put my peace of mind into your hands. You will give me your word to give up the lad Lumsden, or else you will pack off without another word to Dalrugas. It is a comfortable house, and Dougal and his wife will be very attentive to you. What's in a locality? George's Square is pleasant enough, but it's prose of the deepest dye for a lady in love. You'll find nothing but poetry on my moor. Poetry," he added with a laugh, "sonnets such as you will rarely match, and moonlight nights and all the rest of it; just the very thing for a lovelorn maiden: but very little else, I allow. And what do you want more? plenty of time to think upon the happy man."

His laugh was fiendish, Lily thought, who held herself with both her hands to keep still and to retain command of herself. She made no answer, though the self-restraint was almost more than she could bear.

"Well," he said, after a pause, "is this what you are going to decide upon? There is something to balance all these advantages. While you are thinking of him he will probably *not* return the compliment. Out of sight, out of mind. He will most likely find another Lily not so closely guarded as you, and while you are out of the way he will transfer his attention to her. It will be quite natural. There are few men in the world that would not do the same. And while you are gazing over the moor, thinking of him, he will be

taking the usual means to indemnify himself and forget you."

"I am not afraid," said Lily, tersely.

"Oh, you are not afraid? It's little you know of men, my dear. Lumsden's a clever, ambitious young fellow. He perhaps believes he's fond of you. He is fond of anything that will help him on in the world and give him what he wants—which is a helping hand in life, and ease of mind and money to tide him over till he makes himself known. Oh, he'll succeed in the end, there is little doubt of that; but he shall not succeed at my expense. Now Lily, do not sit and glare, like a waxen image, but give me an answer like a sensible girl, as you can be, if you like. Will you throw away your happy life, and society and variety and pleasure, and your balls and parties—all for the sake of a man that the moment your back is turned will think no more of you?"

"Uncle," said Lily, clearing her throat. But she could not raise her voice, which extreme irritation, indignation, and the strong effort of self-restraint seemed to have stifled. She made an effort, but produced nothing but a hoarse repetition of his name.

"I hope I have touched you," he said. "Come, my dear, be a sensible lassie, and be sure I am speaking for your good. There are more fish in the sea than ever came out in a net. I will find you a better man than Lumsden, and one with a good house to take you home to, and not a penniless ——"

"Stop," she cried, with an angry gesture. "Stop! do you think I am wanting a man? Me! Just any man perhaps, you think, no matter who? Oh, if I were only a laddie instead of a useless girl, you would never, never dare, great man as you are, to speak like that to me?"

"Certainly I should not," he said with a laugh, "for you would have more sense, and would not think any woman was worth going into exile for. But, girl as you are, Lily, the choice is in your own hands. You can have, not love in a cottage, but love on a moor, which soon will be unrequited love, and that, we all know, is the most tragic and interesting of all."

"Uncle," said Lily, slowly recovering herself. "Do you think it is a fine thing for a man like you, a grand gentleman, and old, and that knows everything, to make a jest and a mockery of one

that is young like me, and has no words to make reply? Is it a joke to think of me breaking my heart, as you say, among all the bonnie sunsets and the moonlight nights and the lonely, lonely moor. I may have to do it, if it's your will: but it's not for the like of you that have your freedom and can do what you choose, to make a mock at those that are helpless like me."

"Helpless!" he said. "Nothing of the sort, it is all in your own hands."

And then there was again a pause. He thought she was making up her mind to submit to his will. And she was bursting with the effort to contain herself, and all her indignation and wrath. Her pride would not let her burst forth into cries and tears, but it was with the greatest watchfulness upon herself that she kept in these wild expressions of emotion, and the hot refusals that pressed to her lips. Refusals to obey him, to be silenced by him; to be sentenced to unnatural confinement and banishment, and dreary exile. Why should one human creature have such power of life and death over another? Her whole being revolted in a passion of restrained impatience, and rage and fear.

"Well," he said lightly, "which is it to be? Don't trifle with your own comfort, Lily. Just give me the answer that you will see no more of young Lumsden. Give him no more encouragement; think of him no more. That is all I ask. Only give me your promise—I put faith in you. Think of him no more: that is all I ask."

"All you ask, only that," said Lily, in her fury. "Only that! Oh, it's not much, is it? not much, only that." She laughed, too, with a sort of echo of his laugh: but somehow he did not find it to his mind.

"That is all," he said gravely: "and I don't think that it is very much to ask, considering that you owe everything to me."

"It would have been better for me if I had owed you nothing, uncle," said Lily. "Why did you ever take any heed of me? I would have been earning my own bread and had my freedom, and lived my own life if you had left me as I was."

"This is what one gets," he said, as if to himself, with a smile, "for taking care of other people's children. But we need not fall into general reflections nor yet into recriminations. I would probably not do it again if I had it to do a second time: but

the thing I want from you at the present moment is merely a yes or no."

"No!" Lily said, almost inaudibly; but her tightly closed lips, her resolute face, said it for her without need of any sound.

"No?" he repeated, half incredulous: then with a nod, flinging back his head, "Well, my dear, you must have your wilful way. Dalrugus will daily be growing bonnier and bonnier at this season of the year: and to-morrow you will get ready to go away."

#### CHAPTER IV.

"I HAVE been a fool," said Lily. "I have not said anything that I meant to say. I had a great many good reasons all ready, and I did not say one of them. I just said silly things. He played upon me like a fiddle: he made me so angry I could not endure myself, and then I had either to hold my tongue or say things that were silly and that I ought not to have said."

"Oh, dear me, dear me," cried Robina, "I just thought you would do that. If I had only been behind the door to give ye a look, Miss Lily. Ye are too impetuous when you are left to yourself."

"I was not impetuous; I was just silly," Lily said. "He provoked me till I did not know what I was saying, and then I held my tongue at the wrong places. But it would just have come to the same whatever I had said. He'll not yield, and I'll not yield, and what can we do but clash? We're to start off for Dalrugus to-morrow, and that's all that we have to think of now."

"Oh, Miss Lily!" cried Robina—she wrung her hands, and, with a look of awe, added—"It's like thae poor Poles in *Elizabeth* going off in chains to that place they call Siberée, where there's nothing but snow and ice, and wild, wild forests. Oh, my bonnie lamb! I mind the woods up yonder where it's dark i' the mid of day. And are ye to be banished there, you that are just in your bloom, and everybody at your feet? Oh, Miss Lily, it canna be, it canna be!"

"It will have to be," said Lily, resolutely, "and we must make the best of it. Take all the working things you can think of; I've been idle, and spent my time in nothings. I'll learn all your bonnie lace-stitches, Beenie, and how to make

things, and embroideries, like Mary Queen of Scots. We'll be two prisoners, and Dougal will turn the key on us every night, and we'll make friends with somebody like Roland, the page, that will make false keys and let us down from the window, with horses waiting: and then we'll career across the country in the dead of night and folk will take us for ghosts: and then—we'll, maybe, ride on broomsticks, and fly up to the moon!" cried Lily, with a burst of laughter, which ended in a torrent of tears.

"Oh, my bonnie dear! oh, my lamb!" cried Beenie, taking the girl's head upon her ample breast. It is not to be imagined that these were hysterics, though hysterics were the fashion of the time, and the young ladies of the day indulged in them freely at any contrariety. Lily was over excited and worn out, and she had broken down for the moment. But in a few minutes she had raised her head, pushed Beenie away, and got up with bright eyes to meet her fate.

"Take books too," she cried, "as many as you can, and perhaps he'll let us keep our subscription to the library, and they can send us things by the coach. And take all my pencils and my colours. I'll maybe turn into a great artist on the moors that Uncle Robert says are so bonnie. He went on about his sunsets and his moonlights till he nearly drove me mad!" cried Lily, "mocking. Oh, Beenie, what hard hearts they have, these old men!"

"I would just like," cried the faithful maid, "to have twa-three words with him. Oh, I should like to have twa-three words with him, just him and me by our twa sels!"

"And much good that would do! He would just turn you outside in with his little finger," said Lily, in high scorn: but naturally Robina was not of that opinion. She was ready to go to the stake for her mistress, and facing Sir Robert in his den was not a bad version of going to the stake. It might procure her instant dismissal for anything Beenie knew; he might tell old Haygate, the old soldier-servant, who was now his butler and an Englishman, consequently devoid of sympathy, to put her to the door: anyhow, he would scathe her with satirical words and that look which even Lily interpreted as mocking, and which is the most difficult of all things to bear. But Beenie had a great confidence that there were "twa-three things" that nobody could press upon Sir Robert's

attention but herself. She thought of it during the morning hours to the exclusion of everything else, and finally after luncheon was over, when Lily was occupied with some youthful visitors, Beenie, with a beating heart, put her plan into execution. Havgate was out of the way, too, the Lord be praised. He had started out upon some mission connected with the wine cellar; and Thomas, the footman, was indigenuous, had been Tommy to Robina from his boyhood, and was so, she said, like a boy of her own. He would never put her to the door, whatever Sir Robert might say. She went down accordingly to the dining-room, after the master of the house had enjoyed his good lunch and his moment of somnolence after it, (which he would not for the world have admitted to be a nap), and tapped lightly, tremulously, with all her nerves in a twitter, at the door. To describe what was in Beenie's heart, when she opened it in obedience to his call to come in, was more than words are capable of: it was like going to the stake.

"Oh, Beenie! so it is you," the master said.

"Deed, it's just me, Sir Robert. I thought if I might say a word—"

"Oh, say a dozen words if you like; but, mind, I am going out, and I have no time for more."

"Yes, Sir Robert." Beenie came inside the door, and closed it softly after her. She then took up the black silk apron which she wore denoting her rank as lady's maid, to give her a countenance, and made an imaginary frill upon it with her hands. "I just thought," she said, with her head bent and her eyes fixed on this useful occupation, "that I would like to say twa-three words about Miss Lily, Sir Robert—"

"Oh," he said, "and what might you have to say about Miss Lily? You should know more about her, it is true, than any of us. Has she sent you to say that she has recovered her senses, and is going to behave like a girl of sense, as I always took her to be?"

Beenie raised her eyes from her fantastic occupation, and looked at Sir Robert. She shook her head. She formed her lips into a round "No," pushing them forth to emphasise the syllable. "Eh, Sir Robert," she said at last, "you're a clever man—you understand many a thing that's just Greek and Hebrew to the likes of us; but ye dinna understand a lassie's heart. How should

ye?" said Beenie, compassionately shaking her head again.

Sir Robert's luncheon had been good: he had enjoyed his nap: he was altogether in a good humour. "Well," he said, "if you can enlighten me on that point, Beenie, fire away!"

"Weel, Sir Robert, do ye no think you're just forcing her more and more into it, to make her suffer for her lad, and to have nothing to do but think upon him and weary for him away yonder, on yon solitary moor? Eh, it's like driving her to the wilderness, or away to Siberée, that awfu' place where they send the Poles, as ye will read in *Elizabeth*, to make them forget their country, and where they just learn to think upon it more and more. Eh, Sir Robert, we're awfu' perverse in that way! I would have praised him up to her, and said there was no man like him in the world. I would have said he was just the one that cared nothing for siller, that would have taken her in her shift—begging your pardon for sic a common word—I would have hurried her on to fix the day, and made everything as smooth as velvet: and then just as keen as she is for it now, I would have looked to see her against it then."

"I allow," said Sir Robert, with a laugh, "that you have a cloud of witnesses on your side: but I am not quite sure that I put faith in them. If I were to hurry her on to fix the day, as you say, I would get rid, no doubt, of the trouble: but I'm much afraid that Lily, instead of starting off on the other tack, would take me at my word."

"Sir," said Beenie, in a lowered voice, coming a step nearer, "if ye were to leave it to him to show her the contrary, it would be more effectual than anything you could say."

"So," said Sir Robert, with a long whistle of surprise, "you trust him no more than I do? I always thought you were a woman of sense."

"I'm saying nothing about that, Sir Robert," Beenie replied.

"But don't ye see, you silly woman, that he would take my favour for granted in that case, and would not show her to the contrary—but would marry her in as great haste as we liked, feeling sure that I had committed myself, and would not then draw back?"

"He would do ye nae justice, Sir Robert, if he thought that."

"What do you mean, you libellous person?"

You think I would encourage her in her folly in the hope of changing her mind, and then deceive and abandon her when she had followed my advice? No," he said, "I am not so bad as that."

"You should ken best, Sir Robert," said Beenie, "but for me, I would not say. But if ye will just permit me one more word. Here she has plenty of things to think of—her parties and her dress, and her friends and her other partners. There's three young leddies up the stair at this moment talking a' the nonsense that comes into their heads—but there, she would have no person——"

"Not a soul, except Dougal and his wife," said Sir Robert, with a chuckle.

"And nothing to think of but just—him. Oh, Sir Robert, think what ye are driving the bairn to! No diversions and no distraction, but just to think upon him night and day. There's things she finds to object to in him when he's by her side—just like you and me. But when she's there she'll think and think upon him till she makes him out to be an angel o' light. He will just get to be the only person in the world. He will write to her——"

"That he shall not do! Dougal shall have orders to stop every letter."

Beenie smiled a calm, superior smile. "And ye think Dougal—or any man in the world—can keep a lad and lass from communication. Eh, Sir Robert, you're a clever man! but just as ignorant, as ignorant as any bairn."

Sir Robert was much amused, but he began to get a little impatient. "If they can find means of communicating in spite of the solitude and the miles of moor and Dougal, then I really think they will deserve to be permitted to ruin all their prospects," he said.

"Sir Robert!"

"No more," he said. "I have already heard you with great patience, Beenie. I don't think you have thrown any new light on the subject. Go and pack your boxes; for the coach starts early to-morrow, and you should have everything ready, both for her and yourself to-night."

Beenie turned away to the door, and then she turned round again. She stood pinching the imaginary frill on her apron, with her head held on one side, as if to judge the effect. "Will that be your last word, Sir Robert?" she said. "She's your brother's bairn, and the only one in the family—

and a tender bit thing, no used to unkindness, nor to be left all her lane as if there was naeboddy left in the world. Oh, think upon the bit thing sent into the wilderness! It is prophets and great men that are sent there in the way of providence, and no a slip of a lassie. Oh, Sir Robert, think again! that's no your lost word?"

"Would you like me to ring for Haygate and have you turned out of the house? If you stay another minute that will be my last word."

"Na," said Beenie, "Haygate's out, Sir Robert, and Tommy's not the lad——"

"Will you go, you vixen!" Sir Robert shouted at the top of his voice.

"I'll go since I cannot help it; but if it comes to harm, oh, Sir Robert! afore God the wyte will be on your head."

Beenie dried her eyes as she went sorrowfully upstairs, "The wyte will be on his head: but oh, the sufferin' and the sorrow that will be on hers!" Beenie said to herself.

But it was evident there was no more to be said. As she went slowly upstairs with a melancholy countenance, she met at the door of the drawing-room the three young ladies who had been—according to her own description—"talking a' the nonsense that came into their heads," with Lily in the midst, who was taking leave of them. "Oh, there is Robina," they all cried out together. "Beenie will tell us what it means. What is the meaning of it all? She says she is going away. Beenie, Beenie, explain this moment. What does she mean about going away?"

"Eh, my bonnie misses," cried Beenie, "who am I that I should explain my mistress's dark sayings? I am just a servant, and ken nothing but what's said to me by the higher powers."

There was what Beenie afterwards explained as "a cackle o' laughing" over these words, which were just like Beenie, the girls said. "But what do you know from the higher powers? And why, why is Lily to be snatched away?" they said. Robina softly pushed her way through them with the superior weight of her bigness. "Ye must just ask herself, for it is beyond me," she said.

Lily rushed after her, as soon as the visitors were gone, pale with expectation. "Oh, Beenie, what did he say?" she cried.

"What did who say, Miss Lily? for I do not catch your meaning," said the faithful maid.

"Do you mean to say that you did not go downstairs?"

"Yes, Miss Lily, I went down the stairs."

"To see my uncle?" said the girl. "I know you saw my uncle. I heard your voice murmuring, though they all talked at once. Oh, Beenie, Beenie, what did he say?"

"Since you will have it, Miss Lily, I did just see Sir Robert. There was nobody but me in the way, and I saw your uncle. He was in a very good key after that grand dish of Scots collops. So I thought I would just ask him if it was true."

"And what did he say?"

Beenie shook her head and said "No," in dumb show, with her pursed out lips. "He just said it was your own doing, and not his," she added, after this impressive pantomime.

"Oh, how did he dare to say so! It was none of my doing—how could he say it was my doing? Was I likely to want to be banished away to Dalrugas moor, and never see a living soul?"

"He said you wouldna yield, and he wouldna yield; and in that case, Miss Lily, I ask you what could the like of me do?"

"I would not yield," said Lily, "oh, what a story! what a story! What have I got to yield? It was just him, him, his own self, and nobody else. He thinks more of his own will than of all the world."

"He said you would not give up your love—I am meaning young Mr. Lumsden: no, for anything he could say."

"And what would I give him up for?" cried Lily, changing in a moment from pale to red. "What do I ever see of Sir Robert, Beenie? He's not up in the morning, and he's late at night. I have heard you say yourself about that club—. I see him at his lunch and that's all, and how can you talk and make great friends when your mouth is full, and him so pleased with a good dish and angry when it's not to his mind? Would I give up Ronald, that is all I have, for Sir Robert with his mouth full? And how does he dare to ask me—him that will not do a thing for me?"

"That is just it," said Beenie, shaking her head, "you think a' the reason's on your side, and he thinks a' the reason is on his: and he'll have his own gate and you'll have your will, and there is no telling what is to be done between you. Oh, Miss Lily, my bonnie dear, you are but a young thing,

It's more reasonable Sir Robert should have his will than you. He's gone through a great deal of fighting, and battles, and troubles, and what have you ever gone through but the measles and the king-cough, that couldna be helped? It's mair becoming that you should yield to him than he should yield to you."

"And am I not yielding to him?" said Lily. "I just do whatever he tells me. If he says, 'You are to come out with me to dinner,' though I know how wearisome it will be, and though I had the nicest party in the world and all my own friends, I just give in to him without a word. I wear that yellow gown he gave me, though it's terrible to behold, just to please him. I sit and listen to all his old gentlemen grumbling, and to him paying his compliments to all his old ladies, and never laugh. Oh, Beenie, if you could hear him!" and here Lily burst into the laugh which she had previously denied herself. "But when he comes and tells me to give up Ronald for the sake of his nasty, filthy siller——"

"Miss Lily, that's no Mr. Ronald's opinion."

"Oh!" cried Lily, stamping her foot upon the ground, while hot tears rushed to her eyes, "as if that did not make it a hundred times worse," she cried.

And then there was a pause, and Beenie, with great deliberation, began to take out a pile of dresses from the wardrobe, which she opened out and folded one after another, patting them with her plump hands upon the bed. Lily watched her for some moments in silence, and then she said, with a faltering voice, "Do you really think then that there is no hope?"

Robina answered in her usual way, pursing out her lips to form the "no," which she did not utter audibly. "Unless you will yield," she said.

"Yield—to give up Ronald? To meet him and never to speak to him? To let him think I'm a false woman, and mansworn? I will never do that," Lily said.

"But you'll no marry him, my lamb, without your uncle's consent?"

"He'll not ask me!" cried Lily, desperate. "Why do you torment me when you know that is just the worst of all? Oh, if he would try me! And who is wanting to marry him—or any man—certainly not me!"

"If you were to give your uncle your word—if



you were to say, 'We'll just meet at Kirk and market and say good even and good morrow,' but nae mair. Oh, Miss Lily, that is not much to yield to an old man."

"I said as good as that, but he made no answer. Beenie, pack up the things and let us go quietly away, for there is no help for us in any man."

"A' the same, if I were you I would try," said Robina, taking the last word.

Lily said nothing in reply; but that night, when she was returning with Sir Robert from a solemn party to which she had accompanied him, she made in the darkness some faltering essay at submission. "I would have to speak to him when we meet," she said, "and I would have to tell him there was to be no more—for the present. And I would not take any step without asking you, Uncle Robert."

Sir Robert nearly sprang from his carriage in

indignation at this halting obedience. "If you call that giving up your will to mine, I don't call it so," he cried. "Tell him there is to be no more—for the present! That is a bonnie kind of submission to me, that will have none of him at all."

"It is all I can give," said Lily, with spirit, drawing into her own corner of the carriage. Her heart was very full, but, not to save her life, could she have said more.

"Very well," said Sir Robert, "Haygate has his orders, and will see you off to-morrow. Mind you are in good time, for a coach will wait for no man, nor woman either: and I'll bid you good-bye now and a better disposition to you, and a good journey. Good night."

And at seven o'clock next morning, in the freshness of the new day, the North mail sure enough carried Lily and Robina away.

*(To be continued.)*

## GIRLHOOD.

IF one should say: "For ever be as now;  
The bright young smile, the dark eyes' fearless  
No lines of care be furrowed on thy brow; [glance,  
From peaceful ways bring years no severance;  
Hold thy calm course through level places still,  
Nor know the deeper joys and pains that life  
Brings thronging, and its multitudinous strife;"—  
I wonder were it wishing well or ill.

The sluggish water counterfeits repose,  
No sign at all of troublous times is there;  
The turmoil of the hills where first it rose  
Seems all forgotten; how it next may fare  
It will not tell; but, ere it reach the sea,  
Doubt not there are the rapids to be passed,  
And cataracts, each fiercer than the last;—  
So may it, gentle maiden, be with thee.

A sense of nearing conflict seems to haunt  
My mind; and, who knows, is not conflict best?  
I think the dark hair is significant;  
I know the dark eyes give no pledge of rest;  
Nor the quick blush that rises to thy cheeks,  
Nor bright responsive glances thou dost fling;  
Even when thy talk is of some trivial thing  
Thy voice makes solemn music, when it speaks.

I see thee set thy face against the wind  
In this world's roughest places, and I see  
That thou shalt know the doubting restless mind  
We must inherit with our liberty.  
Despair shall hold thee now, and now content,  
And love shall be no stranger to thy heart;  
Pain shall be joy, and pleasure pain, in part,  
And all enigma, till the veil be rent.

Strong spirit, thou shalt not sit idly by;  
I hear thee answer bravely to the roll.  
Forth! and the worst that time can bring defy  
To shake thee from the purpose of thy soul.  
Thou, fighting with the two-edged sword of truth,  
Throughout the darkness of the middle day,  
Shalt stand erect when clouds have rolled away,  
And grasp old age's prize, reconquered youth.

W. KINGSLEY TARPEY.



"Oh, Fortune: how thy restless, wavering state  
Hath fraught with cares my troubled will."

Writ with charcoal on a shutter.

Witness this present prison,  
whither fate
Could beare me, and the joys I quit.

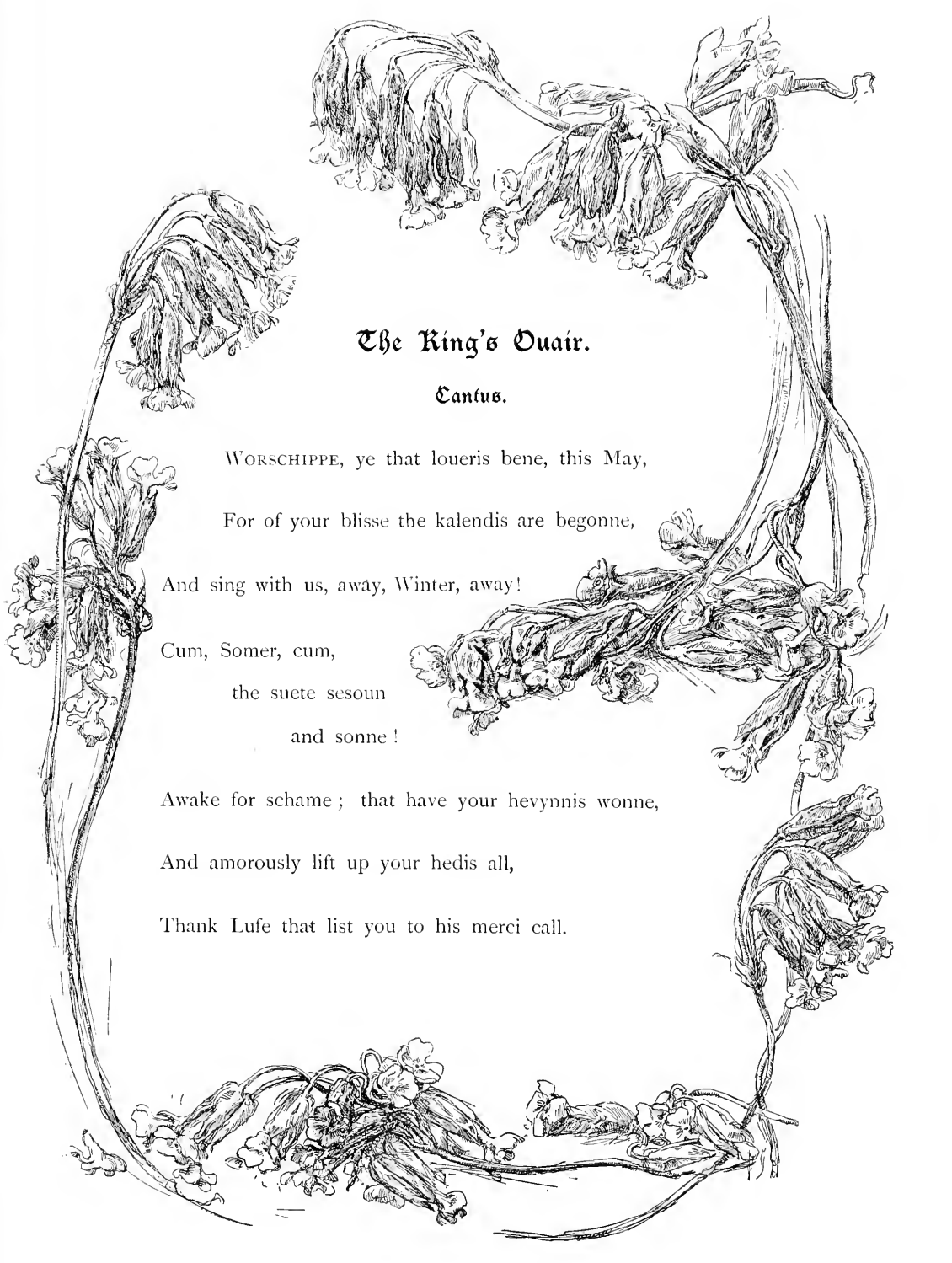
Thou causedest the guiltie to be losed  
From bandes, wherein are innocentes inclosed :  
Causing the guiltles to be straite reserved,  
And freeing those that death hath well deserved.  
But by her envie can be nothing wroughte,  
God send to my foes all they have thoughte.

ELIZABETHE, PRISONNER.

A.D. MDLV.



*"Worschippe, ye that loueis bene, this May,  
For of your blisse the kalendis are begonne."*



## The King's Quair.

Cantus.

WORSCHIPPE, ye that loueis bene, this May,

For of your blisse the kalendis are begonne,

And sing with us, away, Winter, away!

Cum, Somer, cum,  
the suete sesoun  
and sonne!

Awake for schame; that have your hevynnis wonne,

And amorously lift up your hedis all,

Thank Lufe that list you to his merci call.



## THE ROYAL BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

BY H.R.H. PRINCESS CHRISTIAN.

**M**Y readers will doubtless have lately heard so much of the Registration of Nurses, of the Royal British Nurses' Association, of its struggles, and of the opposition it has encountered, as well as of the warm support it has received, as to lead them to regard with interest a short account of how these questions have come to be of importance.

It is very commonly held that it is so easy and natural for women to become nurses, that, if other occupation fail, that profession lies within easy reach of all. Let me say that no greater fallacy could possibly exist. There is no vocation that requires more study, more education, or a greater combination of qualities, than that of a nurse. Though women are doubtless endowed with great natural aptitudes for nursing, by reason of their sympathy and delicacy of perception, those capacities, untrained and uncultured, do not, in themselves, constitute their possessor an efficient nurse. Years of hard work, of education of mind and body, and of experience, combined with sympathy, gentleness, and tact, are essential. To some this assertion may seem to be an exaggeration, but those who have known illness, or who have watched others through long and anxious hours

of suffering, will accept them as self-evident truths.

The strides which nursing has made within these last few years having raised it to the rank of a science, it was felt that the time had arrived when those who had chosen it as their vocation should organise themselves, with a view to securing their ultimate recognition as members of a distinct profession, and to making provision for their mutual comfort, protection, and relief in times of trouble.

But, what is perhaps of still greater importance, it was felt to be due to the good and true nurses that the medical profession and the public should be provided with such reliable information as would help them to distinguish between the properly trained, efficient nurse, and the spurious one who is often none other than a probationer of a few months' standing, who has been dismissed for incapacity.

These, briefly, are some of the considerations which led to the formation of the Royal British Nurses' Association. From small beginnings the movement rapidly grew, until, in the first year, it gathered together a body of over 2,000 members.

Although the movement was from the first sup-

ported by those hospitals and nurse-training schools, which, for several years, had taken the foremost place, others perhaps only a degree less advanced, not only stood aloof, but decided actively to oppose the movement. In some instances this attitude was assumed through misunderstanding, in others, for reasons which need not be specified.

Early in 1888 the movement took definite shape through the united action of physicians, surgeons, matrons, and nurses attached to the greater proportion of the larger London hospitals and infirmaries, in alliance with representatives of many similar institutions in the provinces. The beginning promised well, and the progress made was of good augury for the future of a movement of such momentous importance to the whole nursing world. But the difficulties encountered were great and many, and anxious were the deliberations of those to whom the success of the movement had become dear. Yet their action has been fully justified by results, and by the steady flow of adherents, both nurses and medical men. The aims of the Association seemed so simple, so straightforward, that the opposition which did not lessen with its success and growth seemed almost incomprehensible.

And now it would be well to examine somewhat more closely what were and what are those aims!

First and foremost, the raising of the education, training, and efficiency of nurses. Hitherto the period of training required of a nurse has been left entirely to the will and pleasure of the respective hospitals. Some trained their nurses one, some two, some three years. The promoters and founders of the Association maintain—and in this they have been supported by the report of the Committee appointed by the House of Lords to enquire into the management of the London Hospitals—that three years is the minimum period of training needed to produce an efficient nurse, one who could justly claim the confidence of the public.

Secondly, the formation of a voluntary register or list, on which the names of nurses could be inscribed, together with the names of the hospitals where they had been trained, the *length* of training, and where they had obtained their certificate of proficiency, thereby enabling the public to discriminate between properly trained nurses and untrained

women, rejected probationers, and those who had obtained certificates on false pretences.

I repeat, this list or register is a voluntary one: no nurse is forced to have her name enrolled. The list now bears nearly 2,000 names of nurses, the greater part of whom have received at least three years' training and experience in hospitals. It claims to command the confidence of medical men, many of whom are thankful to refer to it to ascertain the qualifications of nurses whom they desire to employ. Doctors are now beginning to decline to entrust their patients to any but registered nurses, and the time may not be far distant when *not* to be registered will be looked on as an undesirable distinction.

The opponents of registration maintain that it will not prove of any benefit to nurses, and that the registration of nurses will not enable medical men and the public to distinguish between the sympathetic, kind-hearted, and judicious nurse, and one who is wanting in these desirable qualities. The same objection may be raised against the register of medical men, the roll of solicitors, and the dentists' register. It is inevitable that those who send for a nurse in haste should run the risk of obtaining the services of one who, in domestic adaptability, or in temperament, or in some other respect, is more or less unsuitable. Nurses, like all other mortals, are not free from infirmities, and sick people are often very hard to please: but behind all these considerations lies the fact that the name of a nurse, who should unhappily prove herself unworthy to remain on the Register of our Corporation, will be erased. Experience in all other walks of life has shown that what is a terror to the unworthy may be not only an encouragement but a reward to the really deserving.

And now I must say a few words as regards the Benevolent Branch of the work of the Association. I have already mentioned that one of its objects is to provide for the comfort, relief, and protection of nurses in times of trouble. It is needless to add that the income of the Corporation, which is not a large one, sets a limit to our efforts in that direction. And yet so much of the administrative work is gratuitously performed by men and women who believe in and trust the Association, and are devoted to its objects, that not less than a fifth of the income is expended every year in grants made to members who have been laid aside



by illness, and need rest and change of air and scene, or who, through no fault of their own, have fallen into straitened circumstances. This work is scarcely, if at all, known outside the office, for it is carried on under the seal of secrecy, but it would be impossible for me to express in words any accurate estimate of the comfort, help, and relief which it brings to suffering bodies and anxious minds.

The Association is therefore an efficient organisation for the distribution of mutual aid. What is available for the purpose comes from the pockets of nurses and medical men, and to those of the former who are most in need of it, it returns in streams of comfort and kindness.

I am very anxious that the public should be better acquainted with this branch of the work of the Association, because I cannot help thinking that many patients, recovering from sickness, who realise the debt of gratitude they owe to a devoted and skilled nurse, would gladly direct their thank-offerings to the increase of the slender resources available for our "benevolent" purposes.

And this brings me to another subject. Until recently the Association was an unorganised body with no legal status, and no corporate responsibility for the administration of the funds confided to its care. In 1891 an effort was made to secure incorporation by the Board of Trade, but this proved unsuccessful. There remained no alternative but the costly one of applying to the Queen in Council, for a Royal Charter of Incorporation. The Privy Council, having carefully weighed everything that could be said for and against the petition, decided that it would be for the public

good that it should be granted, and, on my dear mother's last birthday, May 24th, I had the happiness, as President of the Association, of telling the assembled Council of the Association, that the prayer, which I had taken the responsibility of presenting in my own name, had been finally granted.

Thus, in addition to a legal status, the Association has obtained a position of dignity and importance, which, it believes, will make what is now the Royal Corporation the rallying-point for nurses throughout the empire, and will bind them together into an organised body, which is destined, year by year, to become more and more the willing and indispensable handmaid of the great profession of medicine, which does so much to prevent and to cure the many ills to which flesh is heir.

I must not forget to mention that, about two years ago, a badge, which members of the Association should be entitled to wear, was authorised by the Council. It is now, I am glad to say, worn by the nurse in the sick-room and wards, not only all over these three kingdoms, but also in many of the Colonies, and in India.

Should any of my readers desire to see a display of these emblems, and to enjoy a sight which would please their eyes and gladden their hearts, let them attend the Annual *Conversazione* which is generally held some evening at the beginning of December; they will then be able to make a closer acquaintance with the Royal British Nurses' Association, to see many happy, intelligent faces, and picturesque uniforms, and to meet some of the best and most gifted women workers of the day.







THE MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS.

## WONDERLAND.

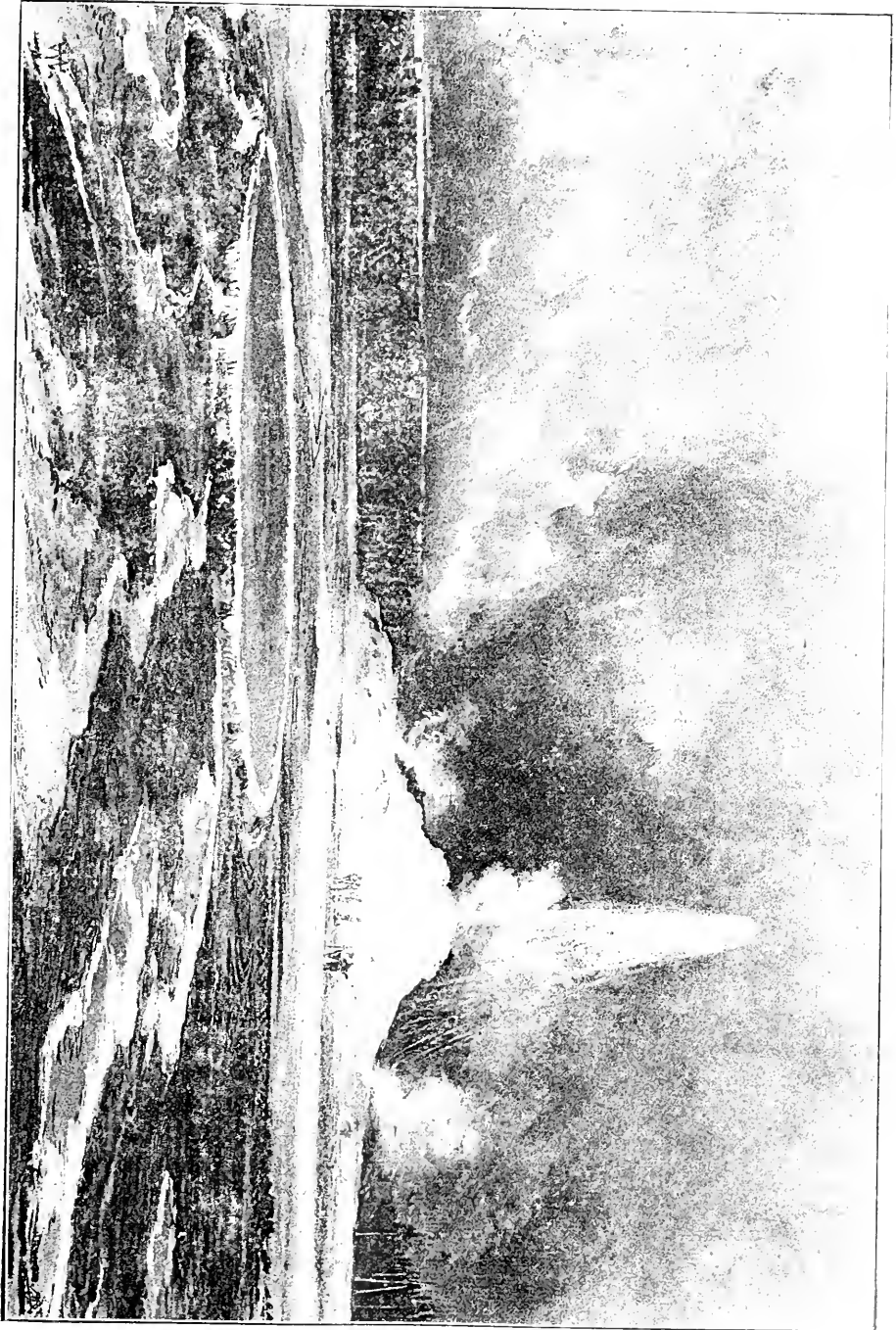
THE fondness for "big" things which characterises our American cousins, and which has prompted some of their most remarkable enterprises, the World's Fair included, may perhaps have its origin in the natural features of their country. No one doubts the influence of physical surroundings in moulding national character, and when we read of mountains 13,000 feet above sea level, of rivers, not hundreds, but thousands of miles long, waterfalls like Niagara, and last, but not least, of a National Park embracing an area of over three thousand square miles, we may perhaps cease to wonder at the prominence given to bigness by our Yankee friends in their estimation of things in general.

Utilitarianism may well be amazed at the audacity which could conceive and enact a law withdrawing "from settlement, occupancy, or sale, a tract of land fifty-five by sixty-five miles about the sources of the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers; and dedicating and setting it apart as a great national park or pleasure-ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people;" but those of wider vision will accord its full mead of praise to the wisdom which thus protected from reckless spoliation, by the vandalism of ignorance and greed, a region which is veritable wonderland—a region over which Nature, with lavish hand, has scattered the marvels of her handiwork. And those especially who, in a globe-trotting age like ours, welcome any fresh exploration ground as eagerly as scholars do a newly unearthed classical treatise, will render their own tribute of praise to the men who have thus conferred, not only upon their own countrymen, but upon the whole world, a lasting boon.

Strange as it may seem, however, the Yellowstone district was only discovered about twenty-five years ago, when authentic reports led to several expeditions, which were undertaken for the purpose of obtaining further information regarding this wonderful tract of country. The results of these explorations were such as to surpass all

previous expectations, and created such widespread interest that the American government passed the law already referred to, and thus secured for the world at large an inexhaustible source of pleasure. Since then crowds of tourists have flocked to the National Park, especially since the completion of the railway which connects the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans: and the ever-increasing facilities of travel have now rendered the journey much less formidable than it must have been to those who first undertook it, when hundreds of miles of staging were inevitable, not to mention the dangers to be apprehended from hordes of Indians who infested the district. And if the chances of adventures of this kind may have proved inviting to more adventurous spirits, those of us who are accustomed to make our journeys in more prosaic fashion will probably experience little regret at the comparative safety of modern travel.

Only those, however, to whom Nature, in her sublimest moods, is of supreme attraction, need make the journey to the Yellowstone country, for nothing in the way of sight-seeing, in its general acceptance, is to be found there. Ancient temples, pyramids, fortresses, towers, and marvels of unique grandeur do abound here: but they are all of Nature's workmanship, and were in process of construction ages before Egyptian or Grecian artificers had dreamt of the monuments which have perpetuated their fame, and still attest the power and magnificence of the nations that gave them birth. Here, one could easily imagine, the Titans had their abode: and the piling of mountain on mountain, which classic mythology describes, seems to have been accomplished on the same colossal scale in some giant contest, of which this region was the theatre. Other trophies of Titanic prowess survive in the huge castles and fortress walls, which affect the beholder with awe and wonder, fashioned, as they seem to have been, by giant hands. Certainly none would be disposed to doubt the active co-operation of Vulcan in the



THE CASTLE GEYSER.

creation of those marvellous structures, which only the god of fire could have reared. Indeed, but little scientific knowledge is required to convince the traveller that he is treading a region which must have been the scene of some terrific upheaval in a bygone age; nor will he fail to recognise in the geysers, still active throughout the greater part of the Yellowstone district, conclusive evidence of the volcanic origin of those unique forms which everywhere excite his wonder. However indisposed for geological research, he will hardly contemplate those "safety-valves" of Nature, some of which rise to a height of 200 feet, without speculations as to their source; or view the exquisite formations around them without some curiosity as to the processes by which they have attained their graceful shapes and gorgeous colouring.

The Mammoth Hot Springs, of which an illustration is given, and which are said to have only one rival in the world, are thus described:—

"In the springs and their beautiful variegated deposits we have one of the most remarkable displays of Nature's architectural work that can be found in the world.

"The deposits cover a space of about two and a half square miles. . . . Passing by several pools of warm water in rusty-edged basins, filled with bright green vegetation, we come suddenly in sight of the main mass of sediment in which the principal springs are found. It is 200 feet high, and its snowy whiteness has suggested the name of 'White Mountain Hot Springs.' The general appearance is that of some huge cascade that has suddenly been arrested and frozen. . . . Examining it more closely, we find that it is composed of a series of terraces rising one above the other like a series of steps, each containing semi-circular basins resplendent with the most beautiful blue-tinted water. The basins are of all sizes, and have exquisite scalloped margins, their marble-like appearance contrasting beautifully with the turquoise-coloured water. These pools have been called 'Jupiter's Baths,' and 'Diana's Pools.' They form elegant natural bathing-places, and one can choose a deep or shallow, large or small one, according to fancy. The water in the upper basins, near the principal springs being warmest, as it descends becomes cooled, so that it may be found of almost any desired temperature. As

it pours from basin to basin, stalactites are formed, which ornament the bases of the pools. In some places they unite with stalagmites built up from below, thus forming columns. . . . In some of the groups of higher terraces, the iron of the water has coloured the edges of the pools most gorgeously, red predominating, mixed with creamy yellow, bright yellow of the sulphur, and greens where there is any vegetation. With the azure tints of the water itself, we have a scene surpassing all art."

The allusion to colour in the last words prepares us for the testimony borne by all who have visited this region, that none can conceive of the wealth and variety of colour with which Nature has enriched it, or the marvellous and seemingly capricious combinations in which she has indulged, unless he himself has beheld them. Here, as nowhere else in the world, she seems to have employed her most brilliant hues in the decoration of scenes which have been truthfully described as more akin to those of fairyland than to those with which we are ordinarily familiar.

Few of our public parks can boast of more than a very limited number of fountains, which, moreover, only play on special occasions; but this great National Park possesses hundreds of hot springs, from which are constantly rising jets of water to the height, in some cases, of 200 feet. The temperature of most of these springs is at or near boiling point; and in the fresh morning atmosphere of this lofty region, whose altitude is about 6,000 feet, columns of steam may be seen arising in every direction, reminding one, as has been aptly said, of a manufacturing town. Every variety of thermal spring is here represented, the deposits around them showing the action of all the principal chemical ingredients, which have produced the exquisite colours before referred to. The grandest of them all, however, is the Great Blue Spring, the diameter of which is 250 feet. This is veritably a huge cauldron of boiling water, from whose surface the steam is constantly rising, so that only at intervals, when swept aside by the wind, is it possible to get a glimpse into its depths, where again we behold those fairy-like creations, which, to be believed in, must be seen.

The intense blue colour of the water, from which this spring derives its name, can only be compared with the azure of the sky. All around



THE GREAT BLUE SPRING.

the deposits show the most brilliant tints, from crimson to delicate pink, combined with every shade of yellow and green.

Interesting, however, as are the hot springs, visitors to the Yellowstone Park would probably turn with feelings of more lively curiosity to the geysers, and experience disappointment should they fail to see any of those eruptions which have excited the wonder and admiration of all spectators. We have all heard of a certain intelligent traveller who resented the churlishness of Vesuvius in not providing a special eruption for his benefit: but in the case of visitors to this wonderland, the chances of disappointment are considerably lessened by the fact that there are not one but hundreds of these fascinating phenomena. The great Castle Geyser, as it is called, is the largest and most magnificent. The accompanying illustration will enable the reader to appreciate the following description:—

“It has a somewhat irregular crater in the centre of a gently sloping mound of sinter. From a platform three feet high, measuring 75 by 100 feet, its cone rises 11 feet. This cone is 120 feet in circumference at the base, and 20 feet in diameter at the top. The orifice of the tube is only three feet in diameter, and lined with large orange-coloured globular masses.

“The eruption commences with a succession of jets of water and steam, which reach a height of 200 feet. This continues for about a quarter of an hour, and is succeeded by steam and spray escaping in pulsations, which soon change to a continuous volume of steam that entirely fills the

orifice, being ejected with steady force and great noise. The noises are indescribable. It sounds as though the Castle had a thunderstorm in its interior, and to these noises of elemental war add the sounds of several steamboats letting off steam, and we can form some idea of the sounds heard during the eruption of the geyser. The entire eruption lasts about an hour and a half.”

With the anticipation of a spectacle of this kind before him, no wonder the tourist should think lightly of intervening toils and discomforts.

Before quitting the Castle Geyser, however, few will omit to come and gaze into the crystal mirror comprised within the basin of the blue spring close by, to which poetic fancy has given the name of “Circe’s Boudoir”—not too happily, we opine, since “the blind old man of Cheos’ lonely isle” has assigned the fair enchantress a home in a quarter of the globe too remote from this “boudoir” to make such a journey very probable. The marble-like basin, with its regularly scalloped edges, is almost circular, measuring nineteen by twenty-one feet. The colouring of the siliceous deposits all around it cannot be described any more than the blending hues of the rainbow, from which these seem to have been borrowed. Beholding them, we are reminded of Turner, whose exquisite appreciation of colour would have made such a scene a paradise for his art. And yet, as all have confessed who have ever entered this fairy realm, art must own its impotence in the presence of Nature’s peerless handiwork.

PERCIVAL RIVERS.



# In The World of Song



BY A SINGER.

## I.—THE CHOICE OF A TEACHER.

IN these days of general musical culture, almost every girl professes to play upon at least one instrument; in many instances she also professes to sing. Of course, I am here understood to be speaking of our own countrywomen. On the Continent one seldom hears a poor performance: unless a girl is proficient she does not play.

It is the British mother who insists on her daughters displaying some drawing-room accomplishment, however devoid of natural ability the girls may be.

Englishwomen might learn a lesson from their German contemporaries in this particular, and then the inoffensive guests at many an evening party would be spared the torture of listening to a succession of sounds, wherein even technical skill is often wanting, while the poetic and imaginative faculties are conspicuous by their absence.

But, it may be asked, "In refusing a hearing to mediocrity, would you not rob our social gatherings of a charm, and banish thence a recreation which at least affords relief from the monotony of bald chit-chat; too often the sole entertainment at an evening party where the company is of a commonplace average?"

On the contrary, I would suggest to parents a plan by which such performances might be raised to a higher level. Instead of devoting six or eight years in the life of an unmusical, or only moderately gifted daughter, to the wearisome drudgery of instrumental practice, let a third or fourth part of that time be spent on the earnest study of singing. This course would enable many a girl whose piano or violin-playing can never rise above mechanical correctness, to afford genuine pleasure by a sympathetic and intelligent rendering of songs.

Now, unfortunately, the course usually pursued is to allot one, two, or three hours daily, to the practice of the piano, during ten or twelve years of a girl's life (this, often quite irrespective of her tastes or talents), while singing is apparently regarded by many as a heaven-born gift, an inspiration! A girl who has made no study whatever of that art, may frequently be seen to stand up before a room full of people and attempt some difficult song with the greatest assurance: while on the strength of one brief quarter's lessons, she will even unblushingly announce herself as "trained by so-and-so." Thus many a professor is blamed for the gaucheries and mannerisms of one who has really not attempted to lay even the foundation of a good vocal style.



Of course there exists the so-called "born singer," who, being endowed by nature with a beautiful voice, and with a sympathetic insight into the meaning of words and melodies, is able to charm, even with her untaught "native woodnotes wild." But it is a truism to say that the loveliest voice can be improved and developed by training, and that dramatic instinct and poetic insight may also gain much by guidance, and be brought by study to a perfection of culture unattainable without the aid of art. It is, however, rarely that we meet with any such wealth of natural endowment, therefore the following suggestions are offered for the use of the moderately-gifted majority.

From the days of Handel to our own time, it has been admitted by competent critics that our countrywomen are dowered by nature with fine voices; yet the prevailing fallacy, which argues that anyone who is gifted with a voice can therefore sing untaught, has been prejudicial to the cultivation of singing as a fine art.

As I have said, singing is too often taken up in a very half-hearted fashion, probably just after a girl has left school; a juncture where, in many instances, a whirl of gaiety proves too distracting to permit of anything like earnest work. However, even were all would-be singers prepared to work in earnest, a new difficulty arises in the question, "With whom, then, should we study?"

There is in the profession so much commingling or clashing of interests, that it is most difficult to obtain unprejudiced advice as to the choice of a teacher, yet the only advice worth having is that of those whose own training and professional standing give to their counsels the authority of experience.

The initial step in the selection of a teacher is to learn whom *not* to choose!

In the first place, do not choose one who may be termed a universalist in music. If you know anyone who professes to teach the piano, violin, organ, theory of music, harmony, and singing, do not entrust your voice to him.

At present, amongst my own acquaintances I know of three fine voices which are in a damaged condition owing to what can only be termed the unprincipled treatment they have met with from one of these musicians of all work. The professor in question is an excellent performer on the piano, and teaches the use of that instrument admirably. He also undertakes to teach almost every other

branch of music, including singing—both in class and privately. Two of his pupils were girls possessed of well placed contralto voices, but so deficient in musical ear as to be unable to sing seconds. They were therefore placed by him amongst the trebles in a large class, to sing music written for soprano voices as best they might. Another pupil, whose voice was a charming light soprano, was made to sing alto, because her great musical ability enabled her to read at sight, and to sustain her part against the melody! Each of these voices suffered under this mismanagement. In all probability neither of them will develop as they would have done had they been judiciously cared for in the first instance. The soprano has recovered most speedily of the three, her marked musical ability seconding the efforts of the voice specialist to whose care these students were ultimately entrusted.

The experience of these three girls is but a sample of what is constantly happening, where instrumentalists, who have made no study of the voice either in its physiological or æsthetic aspect, attempt to teach singing. Such cases will be repeated so long as parents or heads of schools remain unaware that the knowledge of one instrument does not imply capacity to teach the management of another, and especially that most delicate of all instruments—the human voice.

The very excellence of many instrumentalists in their own department—alike as teachers and performers—helps, to mislead people, even of the cultured classes, into entrusting the fresh young voices of their daughters to these untrained "trainers."

One master, who is an admirable teacher of the piano, told the writer that he knew nothing of singing (he had had but one quarter's lessons in his life), and did not wish to teach it. "But," he added, "parents of my piano pupils often insist on my giving them singing lessons as well, and to refuse would lose me the pupil altogether." Another teacher told of similar experience.

Singing, above all other arts, should be studied under the direction of a specialist who has devoted some years to the mastery of the art. It must be remembered that even a short term of mismanagement has irretrievably ruined many a promising voice. It is not a matter to be trifled with.

Should it be the pupil's intention to study pro-



fessionally, a tolerably safe plan is, if possible, to select a teacher who is already known as the trainer of successful singers. If this cannot be done, then choose the pupil of some such eminent teacher, who will impart his method, perhaps with equal skill, and probably at a considerably smaller fee. The distinguished teacher has usually so great a throng of applicants awaiting each successive vacancy, that he is naturally disposed to select only those who show great promise, while a younger teacher is content to bestow very painstaking work upon even second-rate powers.

There is much diversity of opinion as to the relative merits of private and conservatorium study. Either plan has its advantages. The private pupil usually receives more individual care, and is likely to acquire early a more delicately finished style than one who is pursuing her studies at an academy. Unless, however, the student is also prepared to take private lessons in sight singing, theory of music, and elocution (which would involve considerable expense), a conservatoire offers greater facilities for the all-round musical education so essential to the formation of a really conscientious, capable artist. A conservatoire also offers a further advantage in the opportunities afforded for rehearsal with an orchestral accompaniment. Therefore, unless the professional students be possessed of ample means, I would say, "Attend a conservatoire, where you will obtain the maximum of advantage at the minimum of cost, and where there are also scholarships to be won by the worthy."

Of one pitfall, in particular, I should like to warn the unwary youthful singer of limited means. This pitfall assumes the guise of an apparently generous offer of gratuitous instruction, with the further advantage of professional introduction on the completion of a prescribed course of study. In most arrangements of this sort, if the gratuitous teaching thus given does not rob the singer of her voice, she will find herself involved in an agreement, of which the least that can be said is, that the advantages are not reciprocal. Frequently she will be called upon to place her services absolutely at the disposal of her taskmaster, and for a term of years to give him a large percentage on all her engagements, however obtained. This is not the worst that may happen. The voice is often made use of without any regard to its welfare, parts being

assigned to the singer quite unsuited to her compass and style, until a once fine organ is prematurely worn out, when its possessor is free to use it for her own advantage———if she can!

One point I strongly advise. It is that a singer should study under a teacher of his or her own sex, for singing is, after all, greatly an imitative art. At all events, I would recommend this course with regard to the years devoted to the foundation of a good style of singing. I would scarcely, however, go so far as the late Sir Morell Mackenzie, who, in a paper on "Speech and Song," read before the Norwood Literature Society in April, 1891, urges that pupils should have teachers of their own sex, and also, "if possible, a soprano should elect to be taught by a soprano, a contralto by a contralto, and so on." This is somewhat extreme, and, indeed, is controverted by some cases coming under my own observation, where a teacher (herself possessed of a soprano voice), shows most skill in the training of contraltos.

Time is often a weak point in a woman's singing, and therefore in her teaching, but quartette practice to the beat of a bâton would counteract this. Such practice could easily be arranged.

A question is often raised as to the desirability of studying under a progression, or succession, of teachers. After much thought on the subject, my own conclusion is decidedly in favour of such a plan, if care be taken to select those teachers whose method is fundamentally the same. For while one professor will excel in the department of voice development, yet fail to impart artistic finish, another will surpass him in the teaching of oratorio, while a third will bestow an inimitable style of ballad singing.

The unemotional nature, or rather, the undemonstrativeness of the true-born Briton, militates against his or her chances of artistic success. To sing really well demands some power of dramatic expression—some play of feature, and our insular reserve of manner is in this particular a drawback. Therefore these arts should be studied under the guidance of some good elocutionist. In the study of those arts, as in singing, I urgently advise the pupil to select a teacher of her or his own sex. The late Mr. Samuel Brandram laid great emphasis on the advantage thus obtained, when advising a young singer as to her choice of a teacher of elocution.

If the intending pupil, or her guardian, were so situated as to be able to command information relative to the personal characteristics of various professors, I would say—"Avoid the flattering teacher, and place yourself under a disciplinarian, whose praise is hard to win." Flattery enervates; just criticism is bracing, stimulating,—and, alas! the love of flattery, and dependence on applause are the singer's besetting sins! Where these weaknesses are succumbed to, paralysis of the progressive instinct soon follows. Nothing is so fatal to progress as complacency. The teacher whose plan is to flatter, who brings forward the immature student into an atmosphere of insincere adulation, does incalculable harm alike to the individual and to that individual's power of artistic conception and expression. These qualities languish and die for lack of strenuous exertion. On the other hand, the teacher whose standard is high, and whose commendation is never unworthily bestowed, exerts a most wholesome and invigorating influence on his pupil's whole character. Moreover, the flattering teacher is often the lazy one, who will not take pains to bestow that incessant watchful care upon the perfection of those minute points of detail in the performances of his pupils which combine to form an artistic and finished vocal style.

In making a choice between private and conservatorium study, the pupil's home surroundings should be taken into account. If the singer should chance to be the only musical member of a family (which circumstance might possibly mean that she moved in an unmusical social circle), she would find healthful stimulus in associating with other musicians at a conservatoire, and she would probably form pleasant and useful friendships there.

For the professional student, care should be taken to select a teacher who is known to show an interest in the *début* and early professional struggles of his pupils. Such kindly-natured teachers do exist, and judicious inquiry on this point might guide the singer to a wise choice.

For the amateur student—who, however gifted, is probably disinclined to take up separately the study of elocution, sight-reading, and part-singing—it is of the first importance to secure a well-bred

teacher of English birth, who is known to make a specialty of distinct enunciation.

Our mother tongue is not, as some people erroneously imagine, the most difficult of languages to sing. On the contrary, even in the opinion of eminent foreign teachers, it ranks as second only to Italian for the purposes of vocal art, German taking the third place; and, of these four languages, French, with its nasal sounds, presenting the maximum of difficulty to the singer. As a nation, we are proverbially careless in the matter of pronunciation: the lower and lower-middle-classes, both in the provinces and in London, having marked and varied peculiarities of accent, while the upper classes frequently mince and clip their words. Of the two faults, that of mincing the words is the more fatal to clear enunciation.

This emphasises the necessity of selecting a teacher who is known to be especially painstaking in this respect.

With regard to the period of time that it is needful to study in order to produce good results, experts are greatly at variance. The old masters insisted on a most prolonged training, and a subsequent apprenticeship to art in some humble subordinate part in opera. Mr. Sims Reeves deploras the short time given to study in the present day. Yet, on the other hand, many good teachers concur in thinking three years' preparation to be adequate, while at least one noted master of my acquaintance considers two years of study to be enough,—and this teacher is eminently successful in the training of professional singers.

In the case of amateurs, anything short of three consecutive quarters or terms of study is usually thrown away, and likely only to produce dissatisfaction on both sides.

Personally, I should advise the professional pupil to devote at least three years to the study of singing and those kindred subjects so intimately connected with that art; and I conclude these suggestions by begging all students, whether amateur or professional, to avoid the fatal error of ever regarding themselves as "finished" singers. To do this would put an end alike to all prospect of professional eminence, and the attainment of that genuine artistic merit which should be the aim of every singer.



Overthwart and endalong,  
 Forests wide and wild,  
 Brooding on King Arthur's wrong  
 Rode, in sorrow over strong,  
 Lancelot, love-beguiled.

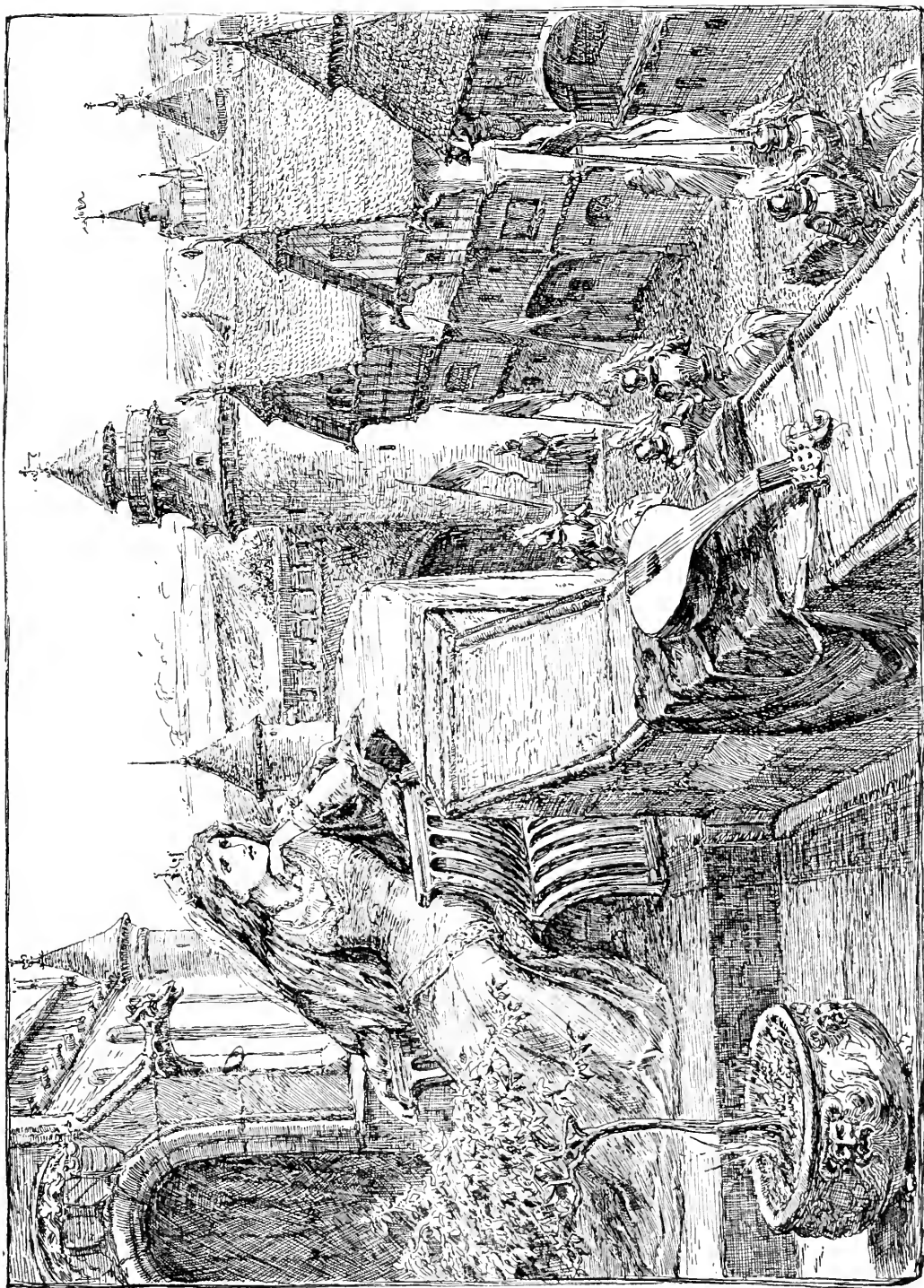
In the goodly company  
 Of the Table Round,  
 Never Knight may equal thee,  
 Yet thou goest heavily  
 By strong passion bound.

Lady's beauty blayed thee,  
 Fiend's thy spirit won,  
 By thy very chivalry  
 By thy very loyalty  
 Thou art all undone.

Overthwart and endalong,  
 Forests wild and wide  
 From King Arthur's heavy wrong  
 Though his steed be swift and strong,  
 He may never ride.

From the lady's haunting grace  
 He may never ride,  
 On the darkness doth he trace  
 Evermore a love-bright face,  
 Eyes with sorrow wide.

Winds that wail in holt and tree  
 Pierce his anguished ear, —  
 "Of thy knightly courtesy  
 Fair Sir Lancelot, succour me,  
 Lorn in loveless cheer!"



"Fair Sir Lancelot, succour me,  
Lorn in loveless cheer."

Launcelet, Launcelet, where art thou?  
Of thy feats —  
'Tis but the breeze, in oaken bough,  
Yet from Launcelet's steel-bound brow  
Drops pour heaviness.

Kinder man than Launcelet  
Never struck with sword,  
Goodlier Knight where fighting hot  
Gentler, courtlier, fitter not  
At King Arthur's board.

In that chapel will he fare,  
Shining through the mirk, —  
Strange it is not anywhere  
May he enter, all his care  
'Tis but idle work.

Lo! the little sacring bell  
Soundeth silver clear!  
Seven lights burn — saints shield him well!  
Still he standeth, dazed by spell,  
Numb'd by heavy cheer.



"All day long Sir Launcelet rode  
Through the woodland ways."

All day long Sir Launcelet rode,  
Through the woodland ways,  
Till the low sun redly glow'd,  
And the lessening tree-bolys shew'd  
Heavens all ablaze.

Overthwart and endalong  
All the wilding wood!  
Now he binds the steed with thong,  
To an oak tree broad and strong,  
Near a granite rood.

"Rouse thee, knight, what aileth thee?  
Lo! the blessed Grail!  
On thy knightly feats!  
Lest in sinful fantasies!  
Still art thou and pale!"

Backward borne upon the ground,  
Backward, heaviness,  
Launcelet falls, like one aound,  
Or in magic slumber bound,  
Yet doth hear and see.





*"Launcelot, wake! the minutes fly!  
Break thy sinful bands!"*

He of all around y worse,  
Though he may not stir;  
Footfall break the mirky air,  
Riffling white a litter bear  
Byt the slumberer.

"Launcelot woe! the minutes flee!  
Break thy sinful bands!  
Glory passeth nigh to thee.  
Lo! the Hol<sup>e</sup> Mastery  
Borne of viewless hands!"

Cold and wan the waxing moon  
looketh from the sky,  
In that litter half a moon  
lies a wounded knight and soon,  
Halpen not, must die.

Yet he dregeth him upright  
By his squire upstayed;  
"Fair sweet lord, by dolorous plight  
Chieft then this wounded knight  
"End with speed<sup>e</sup> aid!"

Lord, for little trespass made  
Heavy dole I bear,  
Lord so long y torment laid  
Sore upon me!" thus dismayed  
Launcelot heard him there

Lo! the chapel doory unfold!  
Here, beneath the rood  
Shone a table silver cold  
Where a Cup of marvellous mould  
Veiled and guarded stood.

"Launcelot! lift thy leaden eyes!"  
He doth inly moan,  
But he hath not power to rise,  
Drowned in heaviness he lies  
Still as any stone.

Awful eyes and shining wings  
Fence the Vessel round,  
Warbled music softly sings  
To the lute's heart-thrilling strings  
Sweeter than all sound.

"Hark! the clash of viewless arms,  
Maiden pinions' whirr!  
Cloud borne clarion's clear alarms,  
Dreamer break thye baleful charms!"  
Ah! he cannot stir.

Shall his trespass be forgiven  
Never, nevermore? -  
Ah! though he were joined and shaven  
Were the baleful bonds once given,  
He would sorrow fore.

"Launcelot, what avail thy might,  
Wit and wisdom golden,  
All thy charm in ladies' sight,  
Goodliness in press of fight,  
Now thine eyes are holden?"

Tapers sparkle on thy nail,  
Angel eyes behold thee;  
Near that cross the Hol<sup>e</sup> Grail  
To thy brother doth unveil,  
Yet dark vision fold thee."

Lo! towards the stricken knight  
Guides the veiled Cup!  
Gone is all his grievous plight  
Whole he standeth, fresh and bright  
And his heart leaps up.

Deeper sunk in drowsiness  
Launcelot nothing knew:  
Heavenly vision round him press  
While this joyous knight doth bless  
GOD who healed his woes



*Penance dire for deadly wrong,  
Tears earth never dried.*

Much he marvelled at the knight  
Sleeping on the ground. —  
"See he hath not grace nor might  
To behold the Blessed Sight  
Shrift he hath not found "

Then the Vision passed, but none  
Wist where it became,  
Lonely stood the cross of stone,  
Table, Cup, and Veil were gone  
With the sevenfold flame.

Overthwart and endalong  
Forests wide and wild  
Night winds wail in mournful songs,  
Honour warped to deadly wrongs.  
Loyalty beguiled.

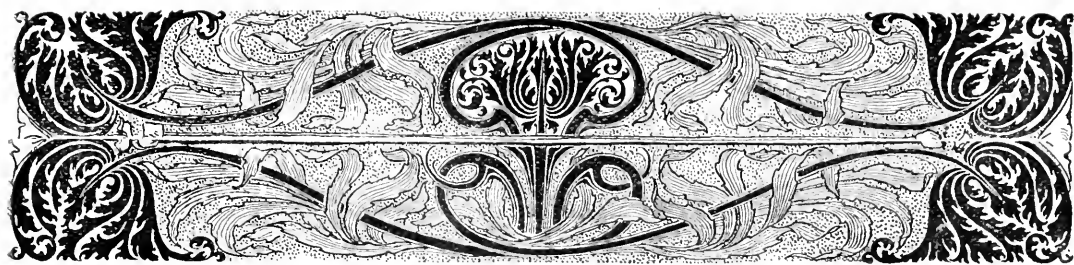
Then Sir Launcelot waked and wept  
In his bitter dole,  
Bird and beast around him slept  
Stare their ordered watches kept  
Round the steady pole

So he sorrowed till the day  
When all birds uplift  
Orison in warbled lay,  
Heartened then he went his way  
Meekly seeking shrift.

Overthwart and endalong  
Forests wild and wide  
Breezes mourn in sorrowing songs,  
Penance dire for deadly wrongs,  
Tears earth never dried.

MAXWELL GRAY.





## A COSTLY FREAK.

BY MAXWELL GRAY,

*Author of "The Silence of Dean Maitland."*

### CHAPTER I.

THE crude, pale brightness of a lengthening February day made the dingy room dingier than ever; it showed patches and rents in the faded cretonne, and called attention to the threadbare carpet, the original colour and pattern of which were forgotten things. A small fire was burning dead between clay sides put into the grate to save coal; the long thickly dusted sun-beam fell across Walter's couch and the dull red table cover, ending on Mr. Ray, who sat, a thin bent figure, with arms crossed before him on the table, pensively smiling. His coat-sleeves were green and shiny, with frayed cuffs, his all-round clerical collar was fresh but jagged at the edge, his face was as worn as his clothing; it was clean shaven except for a small grey whisker; his hair was grey and scanty; his lips now tremulously smiling, were both severe and sweet, there was a light of unspeakable tenderness in the pale-blue eyes bent on his crippled son, who was laughing, actually laughing aloud.

Near the lad's couch, which was placed before the window, sat his mother with a great pile of socks that she was darning with near-sighted care; she, like her husband, was elderly, grey, and careworn, and she, too, was smiling pensively and letting her work lie idle while she removed her spectacles to look at the antics of the little pug

dog, who had just abstracted a handkerchief from unconscious Mr. Ray's pocket, and was hiding it behind the window curtain.

"Well done, Buffie! Clever Buffie!" cried the boy, his pretty pale face transformed from its habitual pinched fretfulness to a natural boyish expression.

"I don't know, Wattie," said his father, beguiled to a mild little joke, "if it is strictly moral to teach Buffie such tricks. Fie, Buffie, fie!" "Bring it back, Buff!" said the mother. "See, Wattie, he is tearing it; call him off, dear!" then the tabby kitten, till then demurely watching the little dog's sport, thought fit to descend with a tigerish spring upon the handkerchief, and snatch the end of it with a pretty affectation of firmness from Buffie. Whereupon Buffie worried one corner of the frail rag, the kitten, with glittering eyes, bristling whiskers and quivering tail, and many a quick twist and turn of its lithe little body, bit and let go and caught, and tossed and twirled the other with infinite variety of graceful gesture and pretty play, sometimes rushing away with a comic face of feigned terror, and quickly returning to the charge with such an air of business-like determination in its antics, as if play were the serious and sole aim of existence, until Buffie, disgusted at the kitling's frivolity, walked away and curled himself with a discontented grunt on the shabby hearth rug.

While Mr. Ray looked and smiled at all this

guileless mirth, his under lip quivered a little. He was thinking of the doctorish prescription for Walter, of generous diet, and various impossible luxuries. With these, he might grow out of his weakness and become a fairly capable man, else he would probably sink, pass away, in a decline. Walter was his only son, the desired child of his old age. "Twenty pounds! he repeated to himself, only twenty pounds might save my boy." Then the spectacles through which he was watching the kitten's play were dimmed, and something rose chokingly in his throat.

Why, people gave twenty pounds for a piece of furniture, a watch, a cart, a lady's gown, a pony, or a cow, while he could not anywhere find twenty pounds to save his child, his only beloved son. He racked his brains as he sat at the table, in the end of the sunbeam, to find some way of raising this trivial sum. His old silver watch would fetch next to nothing; his books were few, shabby, and old; he had no luxuries to give up. It was hard, hard to sit still and see his handsome gifted son fade before his very eyes, and he absolutely impotent to help him. Sometimes when the boy suffered acute pain, his great dark eyes seemed to reproach his father in their large agonised gaze crying dumbly in the words of Ugolino's little dying son in the Hunger Tower. "Padre mir, chè non m' aniti?"

"And I would give the whole world, I would give my very soul to help him;" the poor father moaned in helpless anguish. Had he deserved this at the hands of his Maker, he was sometimes tempted to ask in the bitterness of his soul. "Doth Job serve God for naught?" he heard in reply, and then again he would think of his many sorrows, his hard labours, his lonely youth, and his long deferred marriage, his colourless life, and wonder that he and his patient blameless wife, should be denied the one solace of a strong armed son, the comfort of their old age.

"We have three good daughters, William," the gentle wife would remind him. But he wanted a son, a strong man-child on whom he could lean; and above all, he wanted *Walter*, and to save Walter's young life from cruel suffering and early death.

So many men had healthy happy sons, rich men, happy men, careless men, men who feared not God neither regarded man, while he, who had walked uprightly from his cradle, had but this one poor

blighted boy, who was dying for lack of twenty pounds.

The sunbeam faded from the man's grey pathetic face and the boy's clustered curls, a quick firm step struck the gravel outside, and the door-bell rang sharply.

"It's old Burroughes," said Walter, whose corner commanded the exits and entrances to the house, "I like old Burroughes."

"Old Burroughes" was just over thirty, and Mr. Ray's rector: it was as if a Russian should patronize the Czar.

Old Burroughes' amiable and usually happy countenance was clouded this afternoon; he did not like his errand, and though he rang sharply and resolutely, as one rings at the dentist's bell, or with resolution screwed up to extraction-point, he was glad of the delay that occurred before the door was slowly, tentatively and suspiciously opened an inch at a time, until the startled countenance of Bella, the little maid-of-all-work, was fully revealed. It was a rosy and well-scrubbed face, in spite of one large dab of smut on the nose and another on the forehead, Bella's one distinguishing characteristic being a pronounced talent of attracting the whole of the household dust and dirt to her own small person. Other talent she had none; her fourteen brief summers having been spent in acquiring a wild terror of every human creature, which terror effectually scattered what few wits she might once have possessed.

"Bella," said old Burroughes, contemplating the panic-stricken face thoughtfully and speaking solemnly, "I am not an ogre, I don't eat girls up alive."

Bella curtsied with a distracted air, smoothing her hands over her clean white apron, leaving a black trail upon it, while her poor eyes looked as if they would jump out of her head.

"Bella," continued old Burroughes in his deep voice, "When were you last beaten?"

"Please, sir, the day father took ill," she gasped. "Now he's dead, I ain't got nobody to beat me no more," she added, pathetically, and trembling and shrinking before her interviewer.

Old Burroughes frowned, and silently handed Bella a shilling, and then, having asked for the master of the house, was admitted and announced in the frightened whisper in which Bella habitually communicated information. He had often stood

in that room before, but its dingy cheerlessness had never before so forcibly impressed itself upon him. "If I'm not the biggest coward in the habitable universe," he said to himself, during his reception, when he found himself swallowing down a rebellious something that rose in his throat, "I'll eat my hat! I'll do more. I'll crunch a bishop's mitre. If only they weren't so glad to see me!"

"Hooray!" cried Walter, when it came to his turn to have his thin hand squeezed in the rector's powerful fist. "Why, I knew your step before you came round the corner, 'Here's old Burroughes,' I said."

"Let him call me 'old Burroughes:' I like it," was the rector's response to Mr. Ray's gentle rebuke. The heartiness of George's deep voice, the largeness of his manner and his breezy cordial presence filled the dingy little parlour with a sense of wider, fresher, and more wholesome life. Walter's pains diminished, Mrs. Ray's pile of stockings seemed smaller and her household cares less oppressive, and the grey curate's burden appeared lighter, and his narrow horizon wider and brighter under the cheery influence.

"Here's a poet," the guest added, handing Walter a green, cloth-bound volume, "superior to Longfellow, but not quite up to Homer's 'mark.'"

"These moderns," scornfully returned Walter, whose acquaintance with modern poetry was limited to one esteemed American and an odd volume of "Moore," "are milksops, molly-coddles, old grannies. There ain't any fight in 'em."

In response to which George Burroughes, still standing large and lofty above the young lad, snatched the volume back, and, opening it at random, began in his own deep voice with the long running rhythm of an Atlantic breaker.

"So all day long the noise of battle rolled  
Among the mountains by the winter sea—"

which two fine lines were enough; for when he paused to draw in a mighty breath at the end of the magnificently swelling roll, he was startled by the sound of a short sob, and saw sudden tears overflowing the sensitive boy's eyes.

"Better read it alone first, Watt," he said with a gentle, pitiful smile, "it's a stunning fight, though the man who wrote it isn't dead yet."

"I want to speak to your father on—on—business."

Burroughes sighed, and his face clouded again at the last word, and turning with a slight inclination of the head to Mr. Ray, who was absorbed in the emotion the lines of poetry evoked in the susceptible lad,—

"Poor child!" he said, leading his guest from the room, "his mind is too strong for his body. Anything grand brings tears to his eyes."

"There isn't enough animal in him, that's all," Burroughes replied cheerily. "He'll grow out of that with care."

"With care," echoed the poor father, abstractedly, "and generous diet, port wine, open air, change of scene. I—— I hope you're not cold. I—— I'm sorry there's no fire," he added, drawing up a chair before the empty hearth.

"Not in the least," returned the rector, nervously, "as warm as a toast. But—— hm!—— well!—— ha!——"

Mr. Ray, ignoring these ineffectual stutters, began upon some parish detail, while George Burroughes looked round the chill and cheerless room. It boasted some pathetic ornamental details; a pair of cold alabaster vases on the cold white painted mantel-piece, a small oaken cross, made out of the wood from a cruelly "restored" church in which Mr. Ray had ministered, some sea-shells, a large presentation Bible, some faded photographs, a print of the Finding of Moses, and of Rebecca at the Well, with some dreadful home-made imitations of wood-carving made out of peach-stones and fir-apples, and some girlish arrangements of muslin and ribbons, which accentuated the melancholy of cheap and faded upholstery. The apartment was clean, and distressingly tidy: its small shabby piano was the sole piece of furniture that gave evidence of daily use, else its impossible little sofa and penitential arm-chair, its antique, wool-worked fender-stool, and half-dozen cane-bottomed chairs, its white netted curtains, and veneered walnut table, had a dolefully uninhabited, unused look. It was not only cold with the chill of a sunless, fireless room, but it was distinctly fusty.

Burroughes averred that the smell of it always gave him a cold in the head. He sat on the end of the impossible couch, which he likened to a pale reflection of St. Lawrence's gridiron, and leant forward with his elbows on his knees, and his eyes upon the well-saved carpet, vaguely catching

the drift of his curate's communication on the efficiency of the infant-school staff, and wondering how in the world he was to plunge into the subject that was uppermost in his mind.

"Yes," he replied, "yes, yes. I should certainly counsel and countenance a little wholesome corporal punishment."

"Corporal punishment!" exclaimed the curate, aghast.

"Certainly; most wholesome at that age," returned the Rector, with profound gravity. "You see, to appeal to reason where reason is not to be looked for is—ah!—rot."

"I am, to my sorrow, obliged to agree with you on the inefficacy of an appeal to reason in this case," continued Mr. Ray, "but corporal punishment!"

"My dear Sir," continued George, intently examining the half-moons in his strong, well-kept finger nails, "you are tender-hearted to a fault. I'm not for any savagery myself, especially on such a tender subject as this, but just a little sharp sonorous smacking with the open hand, you know. I'll do it myself if that's all."

"You will smack the infant schoolmistress!" ejaculated Mr. Ray, in a voice of matchless horror, with a look of distraught bewilderment.

George threw back his head and laughed—how that stalwart young parson could laugh! The laughter of Homeric gods was a feeble cackle in comparison with his whole-hearted, strong-chested roar. "No, no!" he replied, "poor little Miss Sprigg shan't be smacked. No, no, we won't smack Miss Sprigg on any account. Miss Sprigg! ha! ha! Not," he added, after a reflective pause, "but what those firm, round, solid cherry-cheeks of hers are not tempting; they offer," he added, unconsciously opening his strong palm, "such a good field for a good sounding smack."

"Mr. Burroughes!" exclaimed the curate, with slow and emphatic reproof, his face turning pink and then pale with shame and distress.

"I beg your pardon!" cried George, with a smothered splutter, "but upon my so—upon my word! If only you wouldn't—forgive me, Sir, but you take things so seriously. One smile from you—and I could have borne it."

"You are young, Mr. Burroughes," returned his curate with gentle sadness, the extreme distress softening from his wistful face, "and I fear that I am old—too old perhaps," he added with a sigh

that went to the younger man's heart and emphasized the feeling that had oppressed him ever since the Marquis of Carabbas presented him to this rich benefice some six months back, and he found Mr. Ray virtually curate-in-charge, as he had been during the indolent, invalidish rule of the last rector—a feeling of the serious incongruity of his position with regard to this saintly elder.

"Dear Mr. Ray," he replied, catching at this opening to unfold the purpose of his visit, "it is not that you are too old, but that I am too young—ah! h'm! You see, ah—I've often thought—and I daresay it has struck you as well—that—h'm—in point of fact, I ought to have a younger curate."

Mr. Ray had turned deathly pale, and his head drooped forward a little with the look of a man hearing his long-expected doom. "You want me," he said slowly and hoarsely, "you want me—to—to resign?"

"I was merely suggesting," returned George, quickly, and a little huskily, "that you mightn't care—ah! at your time of life—to be, ah! under a—rector younger than yourself. Why, it's a thundering shame," he blurted out, "that a man of your attainments, your long and faithful service in the ministry—a man revered for saintly living——."

"No, no!" interrupted Mr. Ray, and turning pink, "you must not say such things, my dear young brother——"

"That you shouldn't be rector," thundered George, "you ought to have a sole charge at least."

"True, very true. At my age I ought to have done better. But somehow," Mr. Ray added, "I've never got on. I'm a failure. I'm not a good preacher. I strive to set the Word honestly and clearly before the people, but I've not the gift of eloquence—and—the young need to be attracted—the people must be 'compelled to come in' in the words of the parable. I——." Tears choked his voice.

"My very dear Sir," cried George, distressed, "you misunderstand me. You're too good for the place, that's what I mean. As for your sermons, I'm sure, for my part, I've never heard one without feeling, though I'm afraid not being, the better for it."

"But you wish me to go?" added Mr. Ray,

swallowing down his emotion, and looking up with a wistful eagerness that pained George to the heart.

"Indeed I don't. I know how splendidly you've worked the parish. I know what the poor think of you. I'm not in the running with the cottagers and the sick—I think you the prince of parish priests."

"Nay," returned the poor curate, blushing again, "you must not say such things, indeed. But I had hoped—I had humbly trusted—that I had been permitted to begin a good work in the Youths' Bible Classes and the Cottage Lectures, and—well! I should grieve to have to leave those dear people. I trust I am not presumptuous in thinking that these works have—under Providence—been blessed. Still——." He sighed, and his fingers trembled in their nervous play with a book-marker in the presentation Bible.

"Now, why the dickens," murmured Burroughes, to himself, "must this good old chap say 'under Providence,' and put in the conventional snuffle. How can he expect people to stand him?" For it must be confessed that the Rev. George's dislike of Shibboleths, and especially of what he termed even Shibboleth, was such that he could not have put up with St. Paul himself had he used them. "Nobody," he said aloud, "doubts that. Why, only yesterday, old Betty James said to me, 'Lord bless 'ee, Sir, there baint nothen wuth living in this yer world for, without it's the Gospel we gets at they lectures, and a cup o' tay to comfort anybody's inside.' She's a ripping old girl, is Betty. But——." Burroughes paused; it flashed upon him that altar-flowers, embroidered stoles, cassocks, and frequent services were poor things in comparison with genuine piety and efficient ministrations to the poor. Yet Mr. Ray was emptying the church; the parishioners demanded more music, brighter services, progress.

"But there is something else?" faltered Mr. Ray. "I—I know I am behind the times. The old spoken responses seem to me more fit, more uplifting—still——."

"Oh! it isn't that," returned Burroughes hastily, "besides, you've given in about the responses. But the Marquis——."

"The Marquis!" echoed the curate, with a piteous uncontrollable quiver of the lip, "oh! if he is displeased——."

"Oh! well, the Marquis is a rich man of the world. He was only saying that he thought—but never mind the Marquis. He ought to give you a living, and won't. But suppose now, dear Mr. Ray, that you were to seek a sole charge; that would surely be the better plan, don't you think?"

The Rev. George was still considering the pearly half-moons in his finger nails, and telling himself that he was the biggest bungler on this side of Acheron, and wondering why tact had been left out in the making of him, when a faint sound made him look up, to see his curate's face, greyer still in the grey of fast gathering twilight, partly covered by a shaking hand, beneath which George saw a quivering chin, and divined the slow cold tears of age and anguish.

"I will try," he faltered in a broken voice, when he looked up after a painful struggle with himself. "But my boy, my poor blighted boy! Alas! alas! I put my Walter before my people, and the Lord help me!"

George, shocked and pained, sprang up, and laid his strong hand gently on the old man's heaving shoulder, "Sir, Mr. Ray, dearest Sir," he cried, "you don't like the plan; think no more of it, I entreat you."

"It—it is Walter's last chance," he gasped.

"Think no more of it, my dear Sir. I only threw out a suggestion," continued George, in his hearty voice. "You shall not leave unless you wish it. As for the Marquis, and the whole blessed lot of them, they may go to Hong Kong!"

## CHAPTER II.

THE table was set for tea in the parlour, when the two clergymen returned to its warmer atmosphere; the dull fire had been stirred and replenished, and Bella, with a black kettle in her hand, was just tumbling into the grate in her over-zealous efforts to be quick, at which Buffie was madly barking, and the kitten, converted for the moment into a tiny treble arch on double pillars, swearing the prettiest little swear in the world.

Mr. Ray, with the abstracted air of long habit, silently rescued the kettle, while the distraught Bella regained her perpendicular, and moustached herself fiercely by drawing a smutty forefinger immediately beneath her small nose; and, casually

upsetting the milk on her way, left the room, audibly falling over the umbrella-stand outside. The family sometimes thought that, "but for the honour of the thing," it would have been more convenient to have dispensed with Bella's services.

"But then what would become of Bella?" Mr. Ray always objected, when there was a question of dispensing with her. "No one else would or could employ the poor child"—an argument the family considered unanswerable.

Bella out of the way, the kettle began its usual sing, Buffie subsided with a contented grunt into his spasmodic dog-sleep, the kitten's temporary agitation passed, and she resumed her interrupted pastime of frantically assaulting, biting, and tearing a crisp piece of paper under Walter's couch. The paper was so light it floated before the wind of the kitten's onrush, she caught it in her paws, tossed and tore it, let it go, sprang on it, and worried it with her teeth till nothing was left but some fluttering bits, one of which George Burroughes, with bachelor's tidiness, mechanically picked up, and threw into the fire.

"Hark to this!" Walter cried, turning to the firelight when Buffie was still.

"The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,  
The hard bands shiver on the steel,  
The splintered spear-shafts creak and fly  
And horse and rider reel;  
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,  
And, when the tide of combat stands—

"Why, you can hear all the swords and the spears smashing; you feel as if some fellow was knocking you clean out of your saddle—"

"Look here, young one," said George, taking the volume gently from him, "if you carry on like this, I shall bring you nothing more exciting than Dr. Watt's 'Divine and Moral Songs'—"

"How doth the little busy bee  
Improve this shining hour?  
She gathered honeycomb that we  
This minute will devour."

"My dear Mr. Burroughes!" exclaimed Mrs. Ray.

"One drops into poetry when demoralised by Walter, Mrs. Ray. Pray let me hold the kettle for you."

Mr. Ray then began an elaborate grace: George bending his head, and looking on the table-cloth,

—which, though spotless, had evidently seen service since its latest journey from the laundress's hand—and hoping the powerful odour from the newly-lit benzoline lamp was nourishing and conducive to digestion.

Before the grace was finished, the door softly opened and as softly closed behind a tired, dowdily-dressed girl, who remained standing, stiff and awkward, until the grace was said, when she came forward, blushing furiously at her ill-timed entrance, and ungraciously offered a limp hand to the guest.

"One might suppose me an embodied indigestion, a walking cold in the head, an unpaid bill, or the Doctrine of Predestination, from her scowl," he thought, stiffly accepting the favour.

"Tired, Milly?" asked her father. "What made you so late, my dear?"

She murmured something uninteresting to George, and sat down rather heavily in a chair against the wall, faintly illumined by the flaring lamp on the centre-table, and drew her clumsily-shod and mud-covered feet beneath her skirts. Her mother, looking at her face purpled by the chill night air, thought that she had been crying. George, who like most men, viewed women at the wrong end, wondered how she came to have such clumsy feet, and why she wore such shabby boots and gloves. Millie Ray was, in his eyes, a species of criminal: she dressed badly, stammered and blushed for nothing—in short, had no manner. All women, he held, should dress well, however simply and cheaply; every woman should have a winning and gracious manner; for why do women exist, if not to please men? Millie Ray could in no way justify her entrance on this earthly scene. He usually spoke of her, with mild contempt, as "that poor Miss Ray." Her entrance vexed him, he scarcely knew why. As the climax to her iniquity, she carried a good-sized and not ornamental basket: it suggested cheap trippers, luncheon-laden—it gave a woman a sort of greedy, acquisitive air, especially when accompanied by an anxious face; and Millie's face was always anxious—another sin, because anxiety is undignified and unbecoming, especially to young women.

"For Wattie," the unconscious criminal said in an undertone, drawing something folded in a fresh green leaf from the offending basket, and passing it to her mother.

"Butter!" cried Walter, in pouting disgust; "and I wanted eggs!"

"But you were longing for fresh butter, Wattie," reproved his father; and the Rev. George observed that the butter on the table was in sharp-angled and white crystallised cubes, such as are cut out of tubs in grocer's shops, and offer a marked contrast to the soft dimples and inviting curves of the fresh farm-product.

"And I waited for it, Wattie," said Millie from her corner. "The butter wouldn't come till the afternoon, and was hard to work when it did." She spoke with a wearied, studied gentleness, yet with a faint quiver, almost a whine of reproach in it, that further irritated the stalwart rector, who was never weary, reproachful, or studious of speech, but spoke out straight and strong, without stint, whatever was in his heart.

"Poor beggar!" he thought, when the parlour was emptied of his large and breezy presence; "no wonder he is prosy and narrow. But he shan't be turned out. They're molly-coddling that jolly little chap, Walter, between them. I suppose he's booked, and it will kill the old man. Wine, good nourishment—here. Surely a dozen of sound old port would be no offence—yet I don't like—" Certain words floated through the rector's mind, and he coloured up in the darkness. The piteous quiver of the old man's chin, and his passionate self-accusations on his own unspirituality, came before him. Perhaps Mr. Ray was nearer the apostolic standard than the man whose paid subordinate he was, the latter reflected, as he stepped into his own ample, well-ordered, well-lighted hall, through which vibrated the musical murmurs of a gong, warning the decorous to prepare for the solemn rite of dinner, the approaching celebration of which was further betokened by an appetising whiff of odour from an opened and gently shut door to the back regions, and by the glitter and sparkle of silver, glass and flowers on snowy napery in the dining-room close at hand.

"You don't appreciate old Burroughes, Millie?" her brother said, when the rector was gone.

"I like him best the other side of the door," Millie replied. She had bathed her face, removed the muddy boots from her weary feet, brushed her hair, and taken a cup of tea. She was now

another girl, refreshed and at her ease, though still pale and tired, with too many angles for a face so young, and bright eyes too large for the face. "You see he is too big for this parlour," she added.

"You mean the parlour's too small for him," retorted Walter.

"*He* thinks so," said Millie, spreading a very little of the sharp-angled butter on a very thick piece of bread; "he's so very superficial. He's an Oxford man; he rowed in the University Eight; he'll *never* forget it."

"I should just think he wouldn't!" said Walter.

"He looks at us all as if we were specimens in a museum," continued Millie; "but he can't read my label—that worries him. He can't imagine any girl between a shop-woman and his cousin Maud, with her affected drawl and her society manners and high hand-shaking."

"You needn't sneer at Maud Ascott: she's an awfully jolly girl; and as for high hand-shaking—well, girls who shove out their hand at a man, as if they thought he was going to steal it—not that there's the slightest fear, my dear Mill—and then snatch it away as if it was poisoned—"

"My dears, my dears, what *are* you talking about?" from Mrs. Ray.

Mr. Ray heard the young voices with a vague pleasure, but he did not heed what they said. His gaze was upon Walter's over-bright eyes and hollow flushed cheek, and in the silence of his heart he was praying.

After tea, the ladies, sedulously hindered by the devoted Bella, who had added a black eye to her moustache, cleared the table. Mr. Ray placed upon it an inkstand and blotting-pad, around which he erected a solid rampart of large and shabby books, a huge commented Bible amongst them. This was the signal for absolute unbroken silence in the room. Walter's couch was drawn up so as to place his head within range of the benzoline lamp on one side; Mrs. Ray, with her work-basket, sat within its influence on the other side; and Millie, after warming her chilblain fingers at the kitchen-grate, took a hand-lamp, put a shawl over her shoulders, and went into the fireless room, and practised on the piano for an hour. Tears fell over her face during this exercise: she kept her handkerchief on the music-stand, and

dried her eyes as often as one of the busy hands got a brief holiday.

"How can I ever tell father?" she was saying to herself from time to time; and when she was half-way through her appointed hour, she remembered that crying leaves traces, carefully dried her eyes, and suffered no more tears to fall. "How shall I tell father?" she repeated, when the set time chronicled by the little silver watch had expired.

Millie had set off at half-past eight that morning, on no more solid foundation than "tea in a mild form," as her father phrased it, and the sharp-angled butter, thinly spread upon bread, to Little Buckley, a farm two miles and a half distant—very muddy miles, too—in a good soaking February rain. Once at Little Buckley, she had been busily occupied with her pupils, except for a break of an hour-and-a-half for a stiff little walk and dinner, until four, when she waited for the perverse butter that had refused to come at the proper time, and employed the waiting-time in cleaning and packing eggs for market.

"I can't abide seeing anybody idle in my house," the farmer's wife had observed, in justification of this invasion of Millie's well-earned leisure. "Idle hands don't do in a farmhouse. We're plain folk, but well thought of. There's no nonsense about Lusters, and never was. If gentry comes into my house they must do as we does." Thereupon Millie had no option, she had to clean and pack the eggs or lose the pat of butter she got at trade price for Walter. It was necessary to tempt the boy's fitful appetite, she was told.

The little Lusters were not gifted, nor was their thirst for knowledge insatiable. They were not interesting or well-mannered children, and such mind as they possessed was set upon out-door interests and occupations, so that Millie found the hours passed in the school-room long, and as the dinner-hour was utilized by Mr. Luster in setting the children puzzling questions in mental arithmetic, their incapacity to answer which implied reproach to their unlucky mistress, who was herself completely puzzled by them, this interlude was as fire to frying-pan.

But Millie's tears were not because to-morrow must bring another long day of toil, so cheerless and fruitless, but rather because a few more morrows would end such day-labour, and with it

the daily meal and the scant payment that made such a difference to the family resources.

"Oh! the little more, and much it is,  
And the little less, and what world's away!"

Milly quoted to herself, half in scorn of grief from so mean a cause. Little Buckley was not Paradise, but there was no other Little Buckley within a walk of home.

Her sisters envied her the privilege of living at home, though their salaries were larger and their work pleasanter. Ethel was a hospital nurse; Amy a teacher in a large ladies' school. Ethel had only a fortnight's holiday in the year; Amy nearly three months. Millie's life, spent at home the whole year round, seemed all holiday in comparison with theirs. So it was no wonder that Millie looked tired and dowdy when she came in to tea, after the long day begun with the rainy, muddy walk.

When the silver watch told her the practising time was over, she was glad, for when one has no musical talent and little musical knowledge, and fingers swollen by chilblains, the piano, played in a fireless room, by the light of a small but odoriferous hand-lamp, is not an inspiring instrument, however conscientiously cultivated, and with whatever dim and confused imaginings of wealth to be won by such cultivation. Wealth to comfort parents' declining days, to provide luxuries for sick brothers and send them to Oxford, even risking the awesome superiority sometimes acquired at that ancient seat of learning.

Neither was Mr. Ray wont to be sorry when this musical exercise was finished, for the walls were thin, and scales and diligently practised runs and shakes and lively tunes, were not conducive to the study of theology and the construction of thoughtful sermons and strong lectures. But that night he scarcely knew when the piano was shut, and Millie, blue with cold, had stolen into the parlour and drawn a little table to the other side of Walter's couch and begun a silent and studiously noiseless game of chess with him.

The familiar scratch of Mr. Ray's pen was unheard to-night. He shaded his eyes with one hand and in the other held a pencil, with which to make notes. The large Bible was open before him, and he occasionally, though rarely, perused a page of the book of Job, from which to the silent chess-players his gaze alternated, while he sat motionless



and absorbed, as if carved in stone. Once Mrs. Ray rose softly and softly mended the fire, but he did not stir. The cheap little clock on the mantel-piece ticked on in loud and fussy self-assertion; the long hand went round the dial, cinders dropped with a faint tinkle, little flames flapped in the grate, Mrs. Ray's needle clicked steadily, the kitten's soft purr was heard; now and again, a piece was moved audibly on the chessboard, and a whispered "check" spoken by the players; and once or twice Buffie, stretched sleeping before the fire, yapped in a faint microscopic way in his dreams—other sound there was none. Ah! yes, there was one—one that dominated all—tore at the father's heart and made Mrs. Ray sigh and glance anxiously from her work to the chess-players. One short, hollow cough, that shook Walter's frail body from time to time.

"And the Marquis gave twenty-five pounds to buy that credence table," the poor curate reflected. *That* table, not only superfluous, but to his sturdy Protestantism dangerous, if not Popish. How much would a sunny spring in the south of France or Italy cost?

"Mate!" shouted Walter at last, forgetting the rules of silence in his exultation; but he was not rebuked.

When the house was still and the inmates asleep, Mr. Ray waked and watched on his bed, still praying for the means to save his only son. His wife, tired by the busy day of household duty and parish cares, slept peacefully at his side; frosty stars looked in at the window, a waning moon rose, shone out and was shrouded in sudden storm-wrack. Millie in the next room was dreaming—dreaming that she was governess to the Czar's eldest son and Walter, healed and hearty, was coming out first-class at Oxford, but Mr. Ray prayed and prayed on till he fell asleep in his prayer, and knew nothing more till the gray wintry dawn came and he found his wife already risen, and sounds of household duties told him it was high time to be up.

Saturday morning, and no sermon begun for Sunday; yet there was a great calm in his heart. The long and strenuous prayer had relieved the over-strain of emotion. Was it right thus to pray for a definite thing, a mere earthly solace? Never thus had he prayed before, never, he hoped, would

he so pray again; he would trust more. *Fiat voluntas tua*—henceforth that should be his prayer, that was enough: it might have been that he had sinned in the passion of yesterday's grief, and had prayed amiss. "*Fiat voluntas tua*," he repeated as he entered the dingy parlour, where the fire burned cheerily, the kettle sang, the kitten sported gracefully, the little dog danced, and the frugal meal and the affectionate wife awaited him.

"William Ray, William Ray," all around him seemed to say, "be no more faithless, but believing. Leave a deeper, diviner love to care for that only son of frail human affection, and be still."

Millie came in and wished him good morning. Her face was worn and pinched, and she seemed tired already: he had not observed her closely of late—perhaps he had neglected her, selfishly and unjustly absorbed in his care for that cherished boy. It suddenly came into his mind that Millie's life was hard and over-grey for her youth. "My dear," he said, "you are not unwell, I hope?"

"No," she was quite well, she replied, flushing with pleasure at the unwonted tenderness, quite well, and as for being worked too hard, she should be wretched without plenty of work. Nothing was so dull as idleness. So saying, with a transfiguring smile on her face, she arranged the books for morning prayer: the family took their places, and then, the usual devotions having been performed, Mr. Ray opened the well-worn Bible Millie placed before him, which remained always ready for the purpose on a certain shelf with the blotting-pad and inkstand. He opened it—that is to say, he took it in his hand and it fell apart in a much-thumbed place in the Gospels—and remained gazing in awed silence and fearful joy, with a strange and solemn radiance on his face, for a measurable space of time. Then he suddenly fell on his knees in his place, signing to the family to do the same, and offered up a fervent thanksgiving for extraordinary mercies and prayers answered, while the Bible remained open on the table before him.

Between the pages, and by comparison small, so that none but he observed it, lay a thin, clean, crisp slip of elaborately watered, figured, and printed paper; clinging to it, and separated by the tremulous motion of the fingers that touched it, was a similar slip; they were Bank of England notes for ten and twenty pounds respectively.

(To be continued.)



*From an original drawing by Sir Noel Paton.*

*"Elaine the fair, Elaine the true,  
Elaine the lily maid of Astolat,*

*High in her chamber up a tower to the east,  
Guarded the sacred shield of Launcelot."*

## MY EDITORS.

By A. FLEMING.

ALTHOUGH Mrs. Carlyle married an eminent literary person, she always objected to playing second fiddle; and that is exactly my feeling in the matter. I also have married a literary man, not perhaps so eminent as Mr. Carlyle, but famous in his way. My husband has a poor opinion of the literary woman in general, and of my literature he has no opinion at all. It so happens that he himself once wrote a poem, and was paid for it at the rate of 26 a line; this has, I consider, warped his judgment. When he refers to his poem (which he does constantly), he always winds up by saying, "And I leave it to you to imagine what I should have earned, had I chosen to extend my poem to the length of, say, 'The Ring and the Book,' or the 'Fairy Queen.'" As his muse sank exhausted at the end of eight lines, I can never see the force of this argument.

Now James Payn, Anthony Trollope, and other literary authorities have said that literature can be learned like any other trade, besides you never know what you can do till you try; just look at George Eliot and Charlotte Brontë, they had no idea they could write, until it suddenly entered their heads to try. So it came about that one evening I said to my husband, "And I also will be an author, I will write a magazine story, and after that a three-volume novel."

"Pray do," said he, looking up from his own MS., "and begin at once."

"I shall acquire fame, and I shall make money," I continued.

"Lots of the latter," he said, and to encourage me to be business-like, he told me to keep a debit and credit account, and gave me a penny washing book, and showed me how to enter all my outgoings for postage, type-writing, etc. on one side, and the payment by the editors on the other. With a pretty touch of pathos he wrote outside, "Winny's Writings." I have often thought that when I am dead and gone, he may come across that penny washing book, and then he will sigh

and say, "Ah, what a woman she was; here are the very beginnings of that wonderful career."

In a week's time my story was written; I mingled humour, pathos, imagination and realism. As for the characters, I simply annexed my friends; the very principle of art is to draw from nature, and I did it: all my friends' peculiarities, their quaint little characteristics, lived and moved in my pages; it was wonderfully life-like. My friends would not like it at first, but when I become famous, I know they will glory in claiming to be the originals: why, I myself know four women who all say they are "Dorothea," in "Middlemarch," and I do not believe one of them really is.

Then I had my story typed, and launching it on the great world, I began to make my acquaintance with magazine editors. I signed my own name, "Winifred Hood," boldly, and I enclosed stamps for its return, but I wrote no letter with it. I felt the timorous deprecatory letter had an amateurish look about it. On Browning's principle, that "your stretch should exceed your grasp," I began with a high-class and high-priced magazine. I waited three weeks. The first week was breathless expectancy, the second a gradually deepening doubt, and the third an utter despair. At the end of the third week that eminent editor sent back my MS., very ragged and dirty, and with merely a printed notice of rejection. I cleaned it up with Indian rubber, and tried to give it a fresh and virginal look, and off it went on its second journey. The second editor sent it back in a fortnight's time, with a pencil note on the last page to the effect that "the story shows talent, but lacks sparkle and go."

This was manifestly an absurd criticism, as the story was full of vigour, as the public will see for itself when it is published. Again I brushed it up and sent it forth; I always enclosed far more stamps than were necessary—it gave a large and generous look to the matter—so that I should not seem to be an ordinary literary hack. The third editor was really a dreadful old woman, he had

pottered through the whole story with a blue pencil, and cut and scored it in every direction; he actually objected to a passing allusion to my heroine's legs, and he rejected the story on the ground that the tone was rather risqué. Rub as I would, I could not get out the blue pencil marks, and I had to have the entire story typed again at an outlay of four and sixpence.

After this I began to get hardened, and I developed a settled hatred to all editors. But hope revived in my heart when editor No. 4 wrote and wanted to see me, and, "would I call?" I hesitated long over my toilet; should I put on a pretty frock and a picture hat, or should I evolve a literary costume with a little touch of Bohemianism? All the literary women I knew were frightfully dowdy and very unfinished about the waists. I could not bring myself to that, so I put on my prettiest things, and the next morning beheld me wending my way along the Strand, and up a dirty little staircase.

I entered a room where many people were waiting, some with MSS. in their hands, and some with portfolios of drawings. There was the throb and noise of machinery and the smell of machine oil. I was taken upstairs and put in a squalid little room all by myself, and told to wait. And wait I did for nearly an hour, my existence was apparently forgotten, lots of people kept running past the door and up and down the staircase, but no one heeded me. At last a young man rushed in, excited and breathless.

"Ah, yes," said he, "you're Mrs. Hood, here is your story. Editor likes it, but it's miles too long. It's 8,000 words, cut it down to 4,000 and we'll give you £3 3s. for it."

He threw it down on the table and was gone before I could answer. My back stiffened: I wished to be treated with greater deference, I felt that my pretty toilet was thrown away. It was, however, useless wasting my hauteur on the

bare walls, so I pocketed my MS. and returned home.

All the next day I went through an agony of conflicting emotions. I shrank from cutting my precious story. As I turned its familiar pages, every scene seemed absolutely essential, it would be like snapping the links of a chain, and yet I was tempted by that £3 3s., and the joy of finding myself (however fragmentarily) in print, and being able to say to my husband "we authors." Ultimately I took time to consider, and in the meantime I sent the MS forth on its journeys again—it was bandied about backwards and forwards, it became ragged, tattered and torn, its edges were frayed, and I had to give it many a new back sheet, and at last I pocketed my pride, determined to take £3 3s. and to mutilate my story.

I had a miserable week; it was like mangling one's first-born. Ruthlessly my pen went through pages of beautiful character drawing, painting, and brilliant dialogue. When it was done, it seemed to me a mere thing of shreds and patches, but I hurried it off to the editor, and in about ten days I got the proofs. Aided by a little paper of instructions, I corrected those proofs—to my mind it is quite fascinating work, and I shall never forget my thrill of tremulous joy at seeing myself even in the proof prints. I paused over every comma, and read whole sentences aloud to realize the effect of alterations.

The proofs went back, and then again came the long months of waiting. After six months I got my cheque for the £3 3s., but my story has not yet seen the light, nor does the washing-book show a very large profit; still I feel that I have my foot upon the bottom rung of the ladder, and some day I shall be surrounded by eager Editors and Interviewers. I am already beginning to sketch out the three volume novel, but my husband still denies my right to say "we authors."



## “Thine Eyes still shined for Me.”

Words by R. W. EMERSON.

Music by C. HUBERT H. PARRY.

VOICE. *Lento espressivo.* Thine eyes still

PIANO. *mf* *p* *dim.* *p*

shined for me, Though far I lone - ly roved o'er land and sea,

*dim.*

*cres.* *dim.*

As I be - hold yon ev - 'ning star..... Which yet be-holds not

*p*

*p*

me. This morn I climb'd the mist - y hill, And roam'd the

*p*

pas-tures through ; How danced thy form..... be-fore my path..... A-midst the deep-eyes

*p*

dew. When the

*poco animando e cres.*

red bird spread his sa - ble wing, And showed his side of

*p* *p*

*cres.*

flame, When the rose - bud ri - pen'd to the rose— In

*cres.*

*rit. e dim.*

*a tempo.*

both..... I read thy name, In both..... I

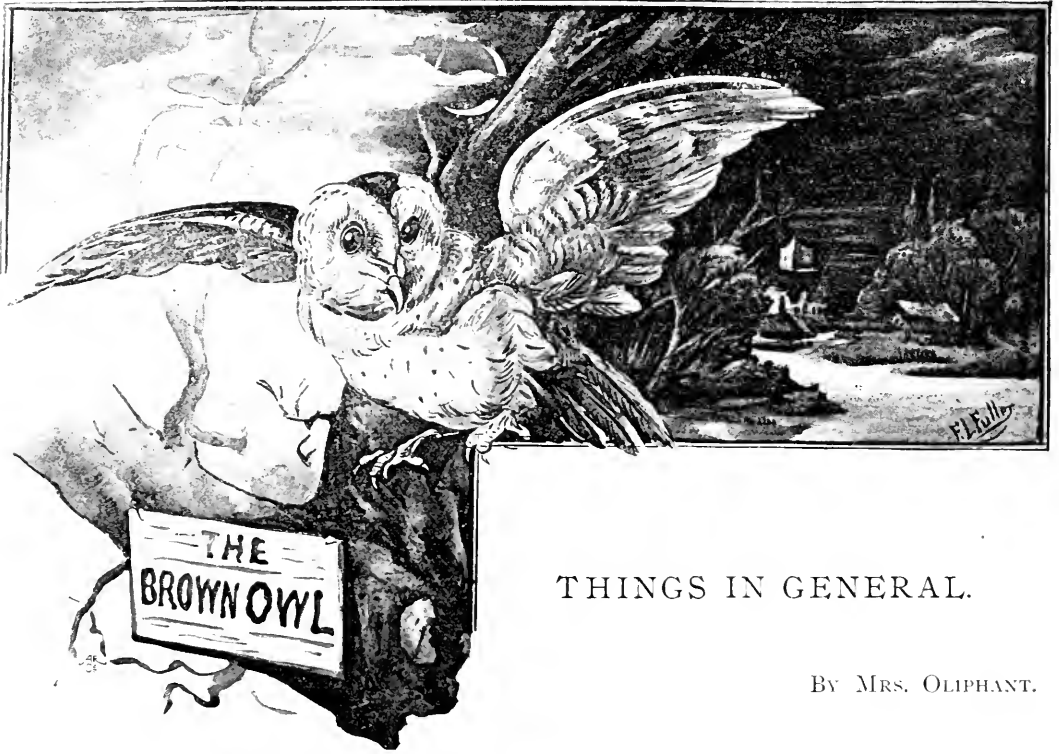
*rit.* *mf* *dim.*

*rit. . . . . a tempo.*

read thy name:

*rit. . . . . a tempo.*

*pp* *p*



## THINGS IN GENERAL.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

THERE is no desire more widespread among men—not to say women—than that of expressing their sentiments upon what used to be called, with a solemnity to which we are no longer accustomed, “the topics of the day.” Most of us do it largely in private: but there is a great satisfaction in letting loose one’s opinion to a larger and more silent audience, where one is secure from interruption. The domestic circle is very ready to interrupt—it contradicts freely, feeling in all its individual members the same impulse which probably sets the head of the house agoing. The elder reader will, I am sure, understand that the ever-ready response of the youngsters, “Oh, no, father,” or still more, “Oh, no, mother,” to what one may say, is a very disturbing influence, and checks the natural eloquence of many an animated discourse. We feel in such circumstances that

“It was merry in the hall  
When the beards wagged all,”

and the beardless were consigned to a respectful silence. To be sure, that might cut both ways, since, in that case, the sex which is without such ornaments, might need to be silent too.

Still, we will have our say if we can. The sense of being able to say what we please, without contradiction, has always seemed to me one of the great charms of the pulpit. That is the only place which is completely free of contradiction—where a man can air his opinions in absolute safety. One consequence of this is that everybody likes to preach. I think that a clergyman must be very hard-worked indeed, or very tired of things in general (which often happens, no doubt), before he declines to pursue his vocation in the pulpit. It is a thing we should all like to do. “Hold all your tongues, and let me speak,” is an address which virtually comes from many lips besides those of the old Scotch lady with whom they are identified. And next best, perhaps, after the pulpit is the printed sheet, where even a contradictory look, a hem, or ha, or significant cough—such as may occasionally trouble the peace even of a preacher if he is sensitive—cannot be either seen or heard. Mr. Andrew Lang, who was one of the first to hold forth from a monthly pulpit in this way, tells indeed of many remonstrances and explanations which he receives by way of the post. But the post is slow and comes after the event. Long



before any one can write and complain, the satisfaction of having spoken has been experienced; and is there not a wastepaper basket at the foot of every writing table? For my own part, many years of subjection to criticism, both public and private, have had a very hardening effect on my nerves. I have no objection to take a hint or a judicious advice from whatsoever quarter: but the other thing wounds me no more. I am willing to confess that everyone has a right to his or her opinion. When that corroborates mine I think it admirable: when it does not I am more doubtful of its judiciousness, but still permit its exercise. "Call me wise," says a Scotch proverb, "and I will allow that you are a judge of wisdom." What a right thinking man! we say, when we find someone who agrees with us. But even that, perhaps, may be carried too far. The present writer once produced a little book, which, as it was of a peculiar kind, addressing a special audience, produced many letters of private acknowledgment and comment. In one of these, the book was said to be superior to anything in the English language: and my correspondent added that he attempted in vain to recollect anything in a Continental tongue which could be compared with it. This opinion, I grieve to say, was received with profane laughter, and not with the gratification which usually attends judicious praise.

I, myself, love to take the part of Her Majesty's Opposition when I listen to the letting loose of other people's opinions: and, in fact, it is an amusing and not unprofitable pastime when you do not carry blame on one side, or applause, like that of my enthusiastic friend, on the other, too far. It is always easier, too, to question, to object, to find the weak points in another man's armour, than to hold the field in your own person. Few, very few, are the arguments that do not have a weak point somewhere for cheerful attack: and contradiction—though no one likes to undergo it—is amusing, so long as you retain the power of saying "Oh, no," in your own hands.

This is not a place to discuss politics, though when politics are so much in the air it is difficult to omit them from the list of things in general; but it is, at least, quite permissible to say that, to live in a time when there is such turmoil and agitation of public matters, if it is distressful in every point of view, affords, at least, so much

compensation that it is exceedingly interesting, and apt to stir up the faculties. To look over the newspapers languidly with nothing more animating to anticipate than, perhaps (if ill-luck favours us), an exciting murder, is very different from the excitement of watching how Constitutional changes are proposed and resisted, and how the fluctuating balance of that national fancy—which, when exercised by so great a mass of the ignorant and unreflecting, cannot be called opinion—may waver, rising or falling. It is like watching a battle, or rather, hearing the report of one—as *Ivanhoe* did that of Rebecca: in which the flag falls and rises again, is seized out of the chaos of combat by a new arm, when all seemed lost: where one crest disappears and another surges over the conflicting mass; where the flank is turned on one side, or the cavalry flashes forth on another—giving the spectator such a shock and thrill of reality, as even the combatants themselves, in their intenser strain, scarcely feel. Politics, like everything else, are apt to get somewhat vulgar near at hand. I don't suppose that the gossip of the ladies and gentlemen on the Terrace, either on those moonlight nights when the visitors were fair and fashionable, or after the middle-class had pushed in and spoiled that resort, would have been the least edifying to listen to. From the feminine point of view, a popular Member's wife for instance (not to say occasionally the popular Member himself)—with her little revelations of what is expected to happen, and reflections of what this one or that has said, and too familiar acquaintance with all that is technical in politics, is apt to make the whole business a little absurd. It is we who are far off who get the most good of it, especially when our lives and fortunes are not dependent upon it. It is still more impressive to see sometimes, as one has done in the present conflict, now and then a sudden raising of the mist, and gleam of set teeth and blazing eyes, startling the bystanders into a consciousness of the fact that there are some to whom this tragic condition is involved in every debate.

There is a story of Mr. Rudyard Kipling's in his last volume, called "Many Inventions" (this young man of genius, who divines everything, has the most curiously flat imagination in respect to titles) which illustrates what I have been saying. He calls it, I think, "A Conference of the

Powers," which is not a very appropriate name: and it relates the sudden entrance of a distinguished writer into a room full of those Indian functionaries, military and civil, whom Mr. Kipling knows so well, and whom he has succeeded in making so interesting to us. These young men know and worship (which I confess is surprising to me) the great novelist, and he is for a time extremely condescending, elderly, and superior to the lads, and begs them, in a paternal manner, to tell him about their little lives and how they occupy themselves in the supposed leisure and boredom of garrison work. One of them has been holding, at the point of the sword, a whole district in peace. Another has been enforcing justice and order in the midst of a fierce community, where there was scarcely a man who was not ready to murder him for his pains. A third held his life in his hand in a centre of perpetual treachery and conspiracy, where he never knew the moment when his roof might be fired over his head, and a knife at his throat. The great writer gradually awakens to a sense of this extraordinary reality. He is appalled, he is struck dumb by the sense of what these boys consider as the most everyday occurrences: they have looked death in the face, they have inflicted it, they have reigned over men, they have dealt forth doom: all at perpetual risk of their own lives. And the spectator stands aghast, and feels himself in the fullness of his powers, which they acknowledge so respectfully, like a mere man of straw among them. That is a sensation of the strongest kind. It is like the touch of Ithuriel's wand, and startles the man into consciousness of the small account he is of in himself, and how wonderful are the things which he has looked upon so lightly. The story is like all Mr. Kipling's stories, exceedingly effective and well told. The most surprising thing in it, however, to me is that these young men should have been so respectful of the author. My experience of young officers is not so. I fear they would generally be quite unmoved by the best names in literature. They generally prefer the worst, poor fellows (with the exception of Mr. Rudyard Kipling; that must be a stupid youth indeed who escapes his spell); but this probably is their misfortune rather than their fault.

A literary person, however different may be the subject with which he or she begins, inevitably

drops, sooner or later, into books. There are few books, however, at this desolate time of the year to call anyone's attention to. The publishing season is about to begin. We shall be better off another time. In the meantime there is one of the later summer successes in which it is possible the reader may still be interested, and which has just called for an elaborate defence and explanation in one of the weighty periodicals which are generally above such frivolous subjects. This is the story of *Dodo*, by Mr. E. F. Benson, which has had an unusual and unexpected success. It is a study (as it is the fashion to say), a flying picture, rather, of the superficial aspect of a certain class of society—the class which is apt to call itself Society, with a capital letter—which all its intimate expounders are eager to describe to us as depraved, heartless, and brainless, to an extent quite inconsistent with the continuance of human existence. The foreground of this picture is filled with the lively figures of a few young ladies, whirling about each other and through the crowded ranks of their kind, in a whirl and rush of folly, which is very like the reality, except in the highly youthful idea that these whirling, flying, fantastic figures are anything but very secondary actors in their own limited world. They have all their fads, and their ideas of independence, as young women of the time are apt to have, and conduct all about them at their pleasure, which is not so general: but the whirl is good, and a little of the conversation is very good here and there, the froth of talk, with a dash of wit, and that absolute inconsequence and incongruity which often serve the purpose of wit—and also with a great deal of audacity and fluency, which beguile the listener for a short time, but get unspeakably wearisome after awhile. The wonder of all is that a young man, presumably from his name one who has a right to be among the best bred and educated of his day, should have thought such a subject a fit mode of exercising his talents. Perhaps this is, however, but another evidence of the curious change of place which makes, people say, the girls tall and the young men short, the women studious or enterprising, and the men frivolous, in this odd generation. One can imagine the writer brought in, in a disguise less complete than that of him who penetrated into the mysteries of the Roman ladies, to listen and report: while the girls chattered their wildest, half conscious of his

presence, and his note-book behind—a practical joke which would disgust nobody in their circle. That the characters in this immodest little drama should have been identified was quite to be expected, and also that the youth should explain how Art aims at representing a type through the instrumentality of many models, and that it is rather a compliment to the artist than otherwise, when these models, though they might sit only for an attitude or a single feature, are divined. Painters don't think so, however, and the plea is as impertinent as the picture.

Mr. Marion Crawford's new book, *Pietro Ghisleri*, is also a society novel, and not without something of the same whirl of company, always the same persons moving in a continual round: but it is Roman society, which gives it a difference: and one of the social villainies set forth is the malicious act of a lady, who almost ruins the happiness and credit of another, by representing her as a *jettatrice*—a person possessed of the evil eye—with the result that she is spoken of as “the lady whom we do not mention,” and that the incautious individual who names her sends a thrill through the company, who one and all put forth their forefinger and little finger, making *les cornes*, to avert the evil. This is a really original and piquant “detail” of what is going on at the present day—almost incredible to us.

A far more brilliant sketch than either of these is in a recent work of Gyp, the famous French novelist, a short novel called *Pas Jalouse*, which is a painful and unclean story, but in which the

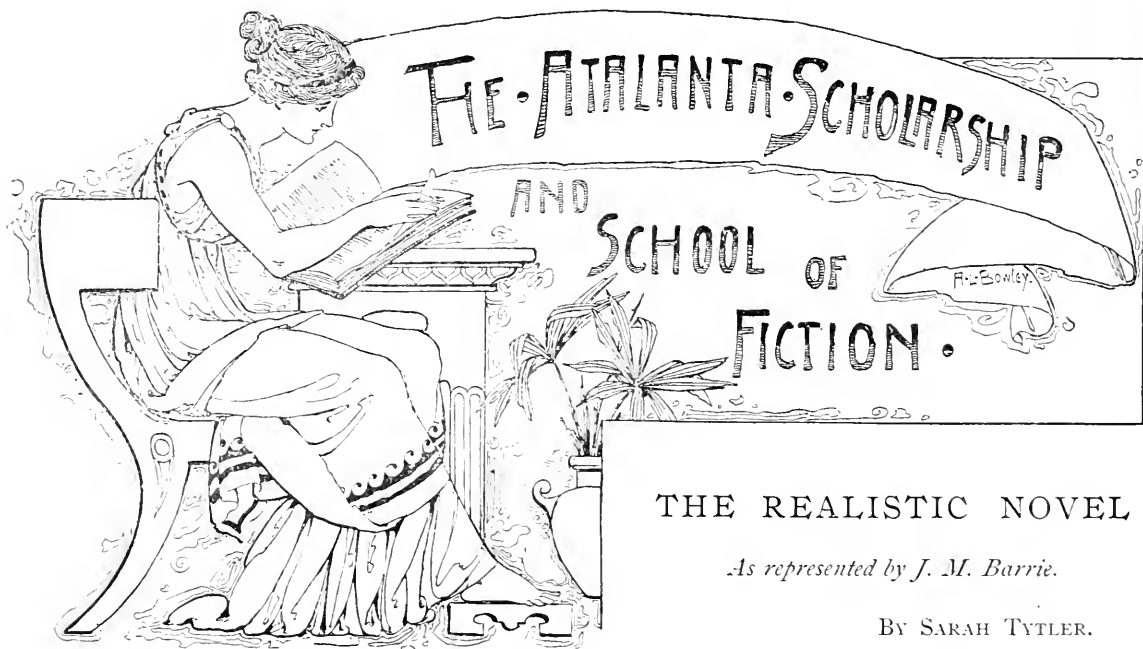
meaningless round in which some dozen families circle about each other in the country, making up daily and nightly encounters, in a dizzy whirl of incessant and monotonous movement—is set forth with all the incisive wit and keen reality of that accomplished writer's airy, yet powerful, hand.

And here is a little book of poetry, which has a scent of flowers, “*Songs, Measures, Metrical Lines: by Jean Carlyle Graham.*” We are a little puzzled by the classification, and cannot profess to say in what metrical lines are different from measures, or that the whole is anything more than simple verse; but there are very pretty bits of warbling, besides many ambitious things which perhaps are not equally successful. Here is a pretty, old-fashioned bit of melody:—

When Loris laughs the birds forbear  
Their chirps and trills, too well aware  
The listening woods their notes can spare  
When Loris laughs.

The little brooks their tinkling hush,  
The whirling eddies softly gush  
And lap the stones that stay their rush,  
When Loris laughs.

And as much more as anyone likes. We are all agreed that the number of minor poets is overwhelming nowadays; but this is only a little one, like the baby in *Midshipman Easy*; and 'tis pretty, as Loris (but she ought to have been Doris) might have said, to end with a bit of verse.



## THE REALISTIC NOVEL

*As represented by J. M. Barrie.*

BY SARAH TYTLER.

WITHIN the last decade a new author has appeared in the first rank of English contemporary writers. In the teeth of great, well-nigh insurmountable difficulties, he has triumphantly established his claim to be read and read again, with intense appreciation and enjoyment, not only by the unfastidious public, but by the most gifted and cultured of his peers.

The writer referred to is Mr. J. M. Barrie, author of "Auld Licht Idylls," "A Window in Thrums," "The Little Minister," etc. The difficulties to which he elected to subject himself were at least twofold. The first was the employment, in a large proportion of his work, of a homely, while strong and flexible, vernacular. With regard to this form of speech, the later Professor Freeman may have been right when he asserted that it was the purest example of Anglo-Saxon extant, and that it was a mark of ignorance to call it "Scotch." All the same, it is a forgotten, strange, and uncouth tongue, unfamiliar, and hardly "understood" of the large audience of English men and women dwelling south of the Tweed and the Cheviots, and that in spite of the fact that they acknowledge the works of Burns to be classics, and do not entirely decline to become acquainted with Sir Walter Scott through his "Waverley," "Guy Mannering," "Antiquary," "Heart of Midlothian," &c.

The second obstacle which Mr. Barrie has faced and overcome, as if he had been his own gallant

"little Minister," was the rude simplicity of the human nature he treated. Not only did he not disdain to deal with the annals of the poor in their extremes of dullness and narrowness, he so brought to light their broad humour and exquisite pathos as to tickle and touch multitudes far removed from the originals in speech, nurture, and individual association.

I may say that Mr. Barrie has encountered and overleaped a third barrier to his attainment—not merely of excellence, but of fame. To his honour be it spoken, his stock-in-trade has been of the things which are pure and honest, lovely, and of good report. He has not been induced to find excitement for himself and his readers in the excesses of vice and crime, in dwelling on morbid subtleties of evil, and in laying bare and gloating over the hideous diseases of the soul. It was said of a great French writer, recently dead, that all men and women were lepers to him. Alas! alas! he did not touch them to make them clean, so that the defiling contact clave to him and dragged him down from his high estate to the most humiliating and miserable of all endings to a brilliant career. But it is not in French schools of fiction alone, or even in those English and American schools which have men for their leaders, that there is evident a growing tendency to have recourse to violent, coarse, nay foul stimulants for the purpose of avoiding what is tame, mawkish, or "goody-

goody." One is reminded of the poor young Russian artist whose autobiography made so great a stir in the world, within the last few years. She felt the utmost horror at being dutiful and womanly, and therefore, as she considered, weak and commonplace, in her life and work. Thus she mistook brutality for strength, and mad defiance of law for greatness and independence of spirit. In like manner many contemporary authors spend their days and nights in striving to produce extraordinary effects, literary fireworks, which result in rocket-sticks and the smell of sulphur. They labour to compass the grievous loss, instead of the desirable gain, of painting black white, and evil good. Mr. Barrie has proved himself quite free from this lamentable perversity, in which, by the way, there is always a lurking weakness, no less than a degradation. He has never sought to represent the depths of crime as the heights of virtue, or to render lying more heroic than truth, or to turn and twist, and juggle away, by specious argument, and a sweeping one-sided conclusion, all sense of right and wrong. He has abundantly indicated that knowledge of life is not confined to the bad side of life; that, indeed, it is only a defective and distorted vision which will persistently regard the seamy side as the sole reality, or even as the salient reality of the present state of existence. To him the lurid phosphorescence which hovers low over the noxious exhalations from decayed and corrupt matter, are by no means superior to the rainbow radiance which rises high—to the sky from which it sprang: above the generous self-forgetfulness, the gentle reasonable courage, the sweet loyalty and patience, which are akin to the divine.

In such literary attributes Mr. Barrie is well worthy of being studied and copied by those of the younger generation, who seek to achieve, in their maturity, merit and distinction in authorship. I do not mean that any author in the bud, who is not to the manner born, should attempt to follow Mr. Barrie in his racy Anglo-Saxon or Scotch. There could not be a greater mistake. Stilted and artificial "mock" Scotch, written in dialogue or attempted to be worked out in traits of national character, is almost sure to be a scandalous failure, an irritating offence to all who have a competent knowledge of the subject. The points which I recommend young aspirants to aim at, in taking Mr. Barrie's work for their model, are his

deliberate or intuitive choice of simple natural subjects, ready to his hand, and his avoidance of the false and deceptive attractions of over-wrought scenes, with the extravagant attitudes of the actors in those scenes, and the thrilling, at the same time debasing, horrors which may be evolved from the outrages committed by moral outcasts.

I would add another word here, as elsewhere, to the untried candidate for literary honours. As Sir Godfrey Kneller warned his tailor, in search of a berth for his son, that it was God Almighty, and God Almighty alone, who made painters, so it is right you should be told it is God Almighty who makes authors. If the root of the matter is in you, if you possess the germ of the bud which ought to pass into the perfect flower, cultivate it, certainly: count no cost too great, no sacrifice—provided always it is a strictly personal sacrifice—too much to foster and develop it. Be prepared for any amount of ungrudging drudgery, and unstinted self-denial, since life is short and art is long. But do not force a foreign growth—most likely to be nipped in the bud—in uncongenial soil. Do not waste time and energy upon it. Do not mistake love of literature, or admiration for the master-pieces of literature, for a capacity to produce even the faintest reflection of those master-pieces. Listen to sober judgment and not to idle vanity and a longing to come before the world in some form. One safe test is, if you have no real joy and no real—quite as real—pain in your work: if you do not prefer it, in the main, to any form of recreation and amusement; if you are not willing to encounter any amount of irksome toil, while feeling it to be irksome, for your work's sake; if you are not conscious—and perhaps this is the best test of all—that you would go on writing, that you could not help doing it, though no mortal eye were ever to see what you wrote; simply to work out your conceptions, just because it is a relief, an absolute necessity to your nature to express what you think and feel about human nature and human destiny—then you are no heaven-born author, and no pains will make you one. This is no more than true, though it remains possible that some gift of glibness, some faculty of bold, unscrupulous delineation, some cunning ingenuity of contrivance, some satyr-like power of cynicism, or monkey-like accomplishment of mimicry, unheeding where it scathes, some chance.

advantage of education or position, may win for you a cheap popularity and a commercial success.

I have been partly led to write this warning by the recollection of a young girl, who would fain have gathered literary laurels, and asked me to help her, prefacing her request by the information that she had been accustomed "to write for a pastime." "To write for a pastime!" To write is the work of a life—a serious, solemn work (though it need not, on that account, be in the least dull or dogmatic, not to say dismal), for which one may be willing to live, and need not be afraid to die.

Mr. Barrie has exhibited himself in three developments—whether they have been arbitrary and accidental, or whether they have been so many foreseen, calculated stages of literary growth. His first book which won notice and high approval was his "Auld Licht Idylls." In it humour reigns supreme. It is the remarkable representation of a remarkable body of men and women, delightfully quaint and unique in their isolation, their stern ultra-Presbyterianism, their mingled tyranny over and devotion to their minister, chief among them for his piety and learning, but little removed from them in his humble estate. These Thrums weavers were full of sturdy self-assertion as individuals, yet of close union as a religious and political body. Their self-conceit was indomitable, and equally unquenchable was their courage under grinding poverty. Grind as it might, it never ground the joy of life out of the Thrums weavers and their womankind. Could they not relish a sermon, and fling themselves into a theological controversy? They could sway their bowed backs in manly, dogged industry, over their "wabs" or "warsle," with the bairns, the meals, the house. They could take an airing in "the square" or at the well. They could stroll on a sufficient errand as far as T'nowhead or the Glen of Qubarity, and sniff the caller breeze and smell the whins which grew all around Thrums. What else could life hold which was worth the speaking of? Densely stupid, grossly illiterate, dourly bigoted, possibly capable of dark cruelty on occasions, the "auld lights" were very gems of dauntless intrepidity, rugged strength and lofty, if somewhat limited, aspirations. The various chapters of the book which is their record, describing them in peace

and under arms, in their kirk and at their firesides, in their christenings, weddings, and burials, are brimming over with sympathetic insight and vigorous drollery.

It was left for Mr. Barrie in a later book, which is, in some respects, his finest, to show that, beneath the strength, yes, and beneath the sordidness of Thrums, were hidden treasures of tenderness. What figure in fiction is lovelier than that of the next to bed-ridden "Jess"? What prodigal is more pitiable, more heart-rending than the much-loved "Jamie"? Where will you find greater guilelessness than in "Tibbie," endowed, under her "mim" "douce" exterior, with the wealth of observation which took in the minister's town-bred wife? For had not Tibbie and Jess studied closely and constantly that book of human nature and human life in Thrums, which was worth so many printed books? The decent dignity and self-control in Jess's best cap worn when the doctor is sent for to certify that she is near her end from diphtheria, is beyond comparison; as is that most human kindness of her gruff old man when he works over hours, in secret, in order to procure for his ailing wife the gratification of the fancy she has to own the silk jacket or manteau, over which all Thrums, viz., its women, is in a state of excitement. Never can that jacket hang on Jess's gaunt shoulders. It can only lie in the drawer of her kist of drawers, from which it may be occasionally taken out, with due respect, to edify visitors.

In "The Little Minister" the author in question has made a new departure from his starting-point. His canvas is greatly enlarged. It contains the old well-marked figures in appropriate situations, but it also holds more figures liberally supplied with elements of interest, though not always in perfect keeping with the background, and with the minor characters. Perhaps it would be asking too much of even so good an artist as Mr. Barrie to expect that, beginning in a low key, and retaining the key on the whole, he should preserve perfect harmony in his composition, and abstain altogether from the high notes and startling interludes so dear to the lovers of sensationalism—of which he now shows he is also a master in his craft. The little minister and his small devoted household are excellent; though the undeclared, unsuspected relations between the schoolmaster and the minister's mother, however requisite to the plot,

have an unsuitable flavour of "Enoch Arden"—a flavour which, since the days when Tennyson's poem, and Mrs. Gaskell's novel, "Sylvia's Lovers," were written and found many imitators, has acquired a certain staleness in novels. The relations in this case are rendered doubly improbable by the near neighbourhood in which two people, once so much to each other, live without the truth being discovered, with the mere knowledge of their vicinity unguessed by one of the pair.

"Babby," in the circumstances, is a still wilder impossibility. By a stretch of imagination, such a creature—made up of nature and art, with a gipsy's freedom, an educated woman's intelligence, and a fine lady's exquisite graces, and inimitable caprices, might have existed, but never, never, would she have been permitted to *remain* the wife of the minister of "The Auld Lights," at Thrums. A marriage "over the tongs" was more than the most liberal member, under his most magnanimous impulse, could have swallowed.

There is only another morsel of criticism called for, and that is with regard to a tendency to exaggeration in the nightmare deluge of "the spate," and in the little minister's most noble sermon, when he is awaiting death—a little modification of the tremendous terms in which the one is described; a little abbreviation of the minister's superhuman flow of eloquence, would have increased the vivid effects in both storm and sermon.

But in truth, in "The Little Minister," when all is said and done, Mr. Barrie has gained yet another victory. He has accomplished an additional feat, and arrived at a still higher stage in his art, though he may not have at once attained the skill to make it match with the other qualities by which that art is distinguished. In the "Auld Licht Idylls," and in "A Window in Thrums," he may only have delineated with wonderful fullness of sympathy, and tact of fidelity, persons and events which have come under his own observation, or have reached him through the observation of others. In "The Little Minister" he has gone a step farther—and it is the crucial decisive step in an author's career. He is no more merely the tenderly true delineator—he is the creator and inventor, with the world of imaginative romance ready for his pen to conquer. It is this last most precious gift of creation or invention which is mainly instrumental in separating genius from talent.

It is the salt in the author's stores of imagery which keeps them ever fresh, and prevents them from growing stale and monotonous by more or less unconscious repetition. It also saves the author from many insidious tricks of mannerism, because he is unstinted in material, and is more occupied with the wealth he has to display, than with the cunning efforts of style by which he seeks to conceal his poverty of story.

One of the most promising signs in a young writer is versatility—power of throwing himself or herself into new scenes and new interests, and eliciting the pith and core of each. One of the least favourable indications is a propensity to harp on one string—an inclination, after doing a good thing in one department of art, to go on hammering at the same model, till the world and even the artist's self is weary of it. Concentration of aim is good, but concentration must not degenerate into isolation and impoverishment of thought and feeling.

In the ascending scale of Mr. Barrie's merits and attainments as an author, I would call my young readers' attention to a significant circumstance. He has begun with the ardent climbing of the hill of truth—however bare and bleak to the untutored eye. He has descended from that breezy height to the charmed garden of romance. He has not been afraid to grapple with the matter-of-fact and the common-place, and to reveal what of brightness and of gloom, of the sunshine of humour, and the heaven of affection, and the hell of a forfeited inheritance, and a lost innocence, lie behind them. Then, armed at every point as a true delineator, he can afford to give play to his healthy, vigorous imagination. The young author is apt to do the reverse—to wander and lose himself or herself among the unreal, before the strong door of the treasure-house of the real is so much as unlocked.

I have not taken into account Mr. Barrie's remaining work, his clever novel, "When a Man's Single," his suggestive essays, collected and published under the name of "My Lady Nicotine," not even such a merry farce as "Walker, London," which has reached and exceeded its "hundred nights" on metropolitan boards, and evoked shouts of laughter from a multitude of play-goers: because it is not by these, however noteworthy in their way, that Mr. Barrie has made his mark among contemporary authors.

## READING UNION.

Write an Essay of not more than 500 words on any one of the following subjects :—

- I. Imaginary market-place in some part of British Isles ; introduce types of character and dialect.
- II. Give impartial estimate of the character of Mary Stuart.
- III. A treatise on the history and construction of the sonnet.

## SEARCH QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

### I.

I. Of whom are these words written ?—

“ Brown, eloquent beauty : who, with thy winged words  
and glances, shalt thrill rough bosoms, whole steel battalions,  
and persuade an Austrian Kaiser—pike and helm lie pro-  
vided for thee in due season : and alas, also strait-waistcoat,  
and long lodging in the Saltpêtrière.”

### II.

1. Who wrote his own epitaph thus ?—

Youth, Nature, and relenting Jove,  
To keep my lamp *in* strongly strove :  
But Romanelli was so stout,  
He beat all three and *blew it out*.

2. Give the circumstances under which they were composed.

### III.

1. To what event do the following lines allude ?—

Is it a time to wrangle, when the props  
And pillars of our planet seem to fail,  
And Nature, with a dim and sickly eye,  
To wait the close of all !

2. Give author and work.

### IV.

Who are reputed to be the originals of—1. *Horace Skimpole* (Bleak House). 2. *Wormwood* (Pelham). 3. *Colonel Newcome*.

All readers of “ATALANTA” may send in answers to the above. Reply-Papers must be forwarded on or before 15th October. They should be addressed to the SUPERINTENDENT, R.U., ATALANTA, 28, New Bridge Street, London, E.C., and should have the words *Search Questions* written on the cover. Prizes of Two Guineas and One Guinea are awarded Half-Yearly.

## ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (SEPTEMBER).

### I.

1. Reference *a* is to Robert Burns, and the new school of Poetry that he introduced ; *b* refers to Coleridge and Wordsworth. 2. The lines are taken from the poem *Wordsworth's Grave*, by William Watson, which contains a criticism on the poetry of the eighteenth century.

### II.

1. “ Ruksh, whose renown was noised through all the earth,” was the horse of Rustum, (Matthew Arnold, *Sohrab and Rustum*).

2. “ Mulýkeh, the Pearl,—the peerless mare, never beaten in speed,” belonged to Hóseýn, (*Browning Mulýkeh*).

3. Lollo, the red pony, belonged to Jackanapes ; it was also the name of his red charger. (Mrs. Ewing).

### V.

Give name of poem in which these lines appear :—

“ I will,” he cried, “ so help me, God ! destroy  
That villain Archimage.” His page then straight  
He to him call'd, a fiery footed boy,  
Benempt Dispatch.

2. Explain obsolete words.

### VI.

1. State briefly the leading motive in Shelley's *Prometheus*.
2. How does it differ chiefly from the rendering of Æschylus ?

### VII.

1. Explain the following verse :—

Our Monarch's hindmost year but one  
Was five-and-twenty days begun,  
'Twas then a blast of Janwar win'  
Blew hansel in on Robin.

2. From what song is it taken ? 3. What incident does it commemorate ?

### VIII.

1. To what two authors have the words of “ Rule Britannia ” been severally attributed ? 2. Of what work do they form part ?

### III.

At the birthday feast of Thaisa, daughter of the King of Pentapolis. Pericles was the sixth Knight. (Shakespeare. *Pericles*).

### IV.

1. Robert Browning. *Home Thoughts from Abroad*.
2. Shelley. *The Question*.

### V.

“ Snuffy Davie,” or David Wilson,—as related by Mr. Oldbuck. (Scott's *The Antiquary*, chap. 3).

### VI.

1. Arthur Hugh Clough. “ Say not the struggle nought availeth.” 2. George Eliot. *A Minor Prophet*.

### VII.

“ The Chambered Nautilus.” Oliver Wendell Holmes. *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*.







SIR FREDERICK LEIGHTON, BART, P.R.A.

# GREEK GIRLS PLAYING AT BALL.

*By permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, London.*

SIR  
Robert's

Fortune.



BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

PART I.

CHAPTER V.

A HIGHLAND moor is in itself a beautiful thing: when it is in full bloom of purple heather, with all those breaks and edges of emerald green, which betray the bog below, with the sweet-scented gale sending forth its odour as it is crushed under foot, and the yellow gorse rising in broken lines of gold, and here and there a half-grown rowan, with its red berries, and here and there a gleam of clear dark water: nothing can be more full of variety and the charm of wild and abundant life. But when the sky is grey and the weather bleak, and the heather is still in the green, or dry with the grey and rustling husks of last year's bloom: when there is little colour and none of those effects of light and shade which make a drama of shifting interest upon the Highland hills and lochs, all this is very different, and the long sweep of wild and broken ground, under a low and dark sky, becomes an image of desolation instead of the fresh and blooming, and fragrant moor of early autumn. Dalrugas was a tall, pinched house, with a high gable cut in those rectangular lines which are called crow steps in Scotland, rising straight up from the edge of the moor. The height and

form of this gave a parsimonious and niggardly look—though the rooms were by no means contemptible within—which was increased by the small windows pierced high up in the wall. There was no garden on that side, not so much as the little plot to which even a cottage has a right. Embedded within the high, sharp-cornered walls behind was a kitchen garden or kail yard, where the commonest vegetables were grown with a border of gooseberries and a few plants of sweet william and applingie; but this was not visible to give any softness to the prospect. The heather came up uncompromisingly, with a little hillock of green turf here and there, to the very walls, which had once been white-washed, and still in their forlorn dinginess lent a little variety to the landscape; but this did but add to the cold, pinched, and resistant character of the house. It looked like a prim ancient lady, very spare, and holding her skirts close round her in the pride of penury and evil fortune. The door was in the out-standing gable, and admitted directly into a low passage from which a spiral stair mounted to the rooms above. On the ground floor there was a low, dark-pannelled dining room and library full of ancient books, but these rooms were used only when Sir Robert

came for shooting, which happened very rarely. The drawing room upstairs was bare also, but yet had some lingerings of old-fashioned grace. From the small, deepset, high windows there was a wide, unbroken view over the moor. The moor stretched everywhere, miles of it, grey as the low sky which hung over it, a canopy of clouds. The only relief was a bush of gorse here and there half in blossom, for the gorse is never wholly out of blossom, as everybody knows—and the dark gleam of the water in a cutting, black as the bog which it was meant to drain. The dreary moorland road which skirted the edge passed in front of the house, but was only visible from these windows at a corner, where it emerged for a moment from a group of blighted firs, before disappearing between the banks of heather and whin, which had been cut to give it passage. This was the only relief from the monotony of the moor.

It was in this house that Lily and her maid arrived after a journey which had not been so uncheerful as they anticipated. A journey by stage coach through a beautiful country can scarcely be dreary in the worst of circumstances. The arrivals, the changes, the villages and towns passed through, the contact with one's fellow-creatures which is inevitable, shake off more or less the most sullen discontent—and Lily was not sullen, while Beenie was one of the most open-hearted of human creatures, ready to interest herself in every one she met, and to talk to them and give her advice upon their circumstances. The pair met all sorts of people on their journey, and they made almost as many friendships; and thus partially forgot the penitential object of their own travels, and that they were being sent off to the ends of the earth.

It was only when "the gig" met them at the village where the coach stopped on its northern route that their destination began to oppress either the mistress or the maid. This was on the afternoon of a day which had been partially bright and partially wet, the best development of weather to be hoped for in the north. The village was a small collection of cottages, partly with tiled roofs, making a welcome gleam of colour, but subdued by a number of those respectable stone houses with blue tiles, which were and are the ideal of comfortable sobriety which, in defiance of all the necessities of the landscape, the Scotch middle class has unfortunately fixed upon. The church stood in the

midst—a respectable oblong barn, with a sort of long extinguisher in the shape of a steeple attached to it. On the outskirts the cottages became less comfortable and more picturesque, thatched, and covered with lichens. It was a well-to-do village. The "merchant," as he was called, *i.e.*, the keeper of the "general" shop, was a Lowland Scot, very contemptuous of "thae Highlanders," and there was a writer or solicitor in the place, and a doctor, besides the minister, who formed a little aristocracy. The English minister so called, that is, the Episcopalian, came occasionally—once in two or three Sundays—to officiate in a smaller barn, without any extinguisher, which held itself a little apart in a corner, not to mingle with the common people who did not possess Apostolical Succession: though indeed in those days there was little controversy, the Episcopalians being generally of that ritual by birth, and unpolemical, making no pretensions to superiority over the native Kirk.

The gig that met the travellers at Kinloch-Rugas was a tall vehicle on two wheels, which had once been painted yellow, but which was scarcely trim enough to represent that type of respectability which a certain young Thomas Carlyle, pursuing the vague trade of a literary man in Edinburgh, had declared it to be. It was followed closely by a rough cart, in which Beenie and the boxes were packed away. They were not large boxes. One, called "the hair trunk," contained Lily's everyday dresses, but no provision for anything beyond the most ordinary needs, for there was no society nor any occasion for decorative garments on the moors. Beenie's box was smaller, as became a serving woman. These accessories were all in the fashion of their time, which was (like Waverley, yet ah, so unlike!) sixty years since or thereabout—in the age before railways, or at least before they had penetrated to the distant portions of the country. The driver of the gig was a middle-aged countryman, very decent in a suit of grey "plaidin"—what we now call tweed—with a head of sandy hair grizzled and considerably blown about by the wind across the moor. His face was ruddy and wrinkled, of the colour of a winter apple, in fine shades of red and brown, his shaggy eyebrows a little drawn together—by the "knitting of his brows under the glaring sun," and the setting of his teeth against the breeze. He said, "Hey, Beenie!" as his salutation to the party before he doffed his

bonnet to the young lady. Lily was not sure that it was quite respectful, but Dougal meant no disrespect. He was a little shy of her, being unfamiliar with her grown-up aspect and reverential of her young ladyhood—but he was at his ease with Robina, who was a native of the parish, the daughter of the late blacksmith, and “weel connectit” among the rustic folk. It would have been an ease to Dougal to have had the maid beside him instead of the mistress, and it was to Beenie he addressed his first remarks over his shoulder, from pure shyness and want of confidence in his own powers of entertaining a lady. “Ye’ll have had a long journey,” he said. “The coach she’s aye late. She’s like a thriftless lass, Beenie, my woman. She just dallies, dallies at the first, and is like to break her neck at the end.”

“But she showed no desire to break her neck, I assure you,” said Lily. “She was in no hurry. We have just taken it very easy up hill and down dale.”

“Ay, Ay!” he said, “we ken the ways o’ them,”—with a glance over his shoulder—“are you sure you’re weel happit up, Beenie, for there’s a cauld wind crossing the moor?”

“And how is Katrin, Dougal?” Lily asked, fastening her cloak up to her throat.

“Oh, she’s weel enouch: you’ll see little differ since ye left us last. We’re a wee dried up with the peat-reck, and a wee blawn aboot by the wind. But ye’ll mind that fine, Beenie woman, and get used to’t like her and me.”

Lily laid impatient fingers on the reins, pulling Dougal’s hand, as if he had been the unsteady rough pony he drove. “Speak to me,” she said, “you rude person, and not to Beenie. Do you think I am nobody, or that I cannot understand?”

“Bless us all! No such a thought was in my head. Beenie, are ye sitting straight? for when the powny’s first started whiles he lets out.”

“Let me drive him,” Lily cried. “I’ll like it all the better if he lets out: and you can go behind if you like and talk to Beenie at your ease.”

“Na, na,” said Dougal, with a grin. “He kens wha’s driving him. A bit light hand like yours would have very sma’ effect upon Rory. Hey, laddies! get out of my powny’s way!”

Rory carried out the prognostics of his driver by tossing his shaggy head in the air, and making a dash forward, scattering the children who had

gathered about to stare at the new arrivals: though before he got to the end of the village street, he had settled into his steady pace, which was quite uninfluenced by any skill in driving on Dougal’s part, but was entirely the desire and meaning of that very characteristic member of society—himself. The day had settled into an afternoon serenity and unusual quietness of light. The mountains stood high in the even air, without any dramatic changes, Schehallion, with his conical crest, dominating the lesser hills, and wearing soberly his mantle of purple, subdued by grey. The road lay, for a few miles, through broken ground, diversified with clumps of wood, windblown firs, and beeches tossing their feathery branches in the air—crossing by a little bridge, a brown and lively trout stream, which went brawling through the village, but afterwards fell into deeper shadows, penetrating between close fir woods, before it reached the edge of the moor round which it ran its lonely way. Lily’s spirits began to rise. The sense of novelty, the pleasant feeling of arrival, and of all the possibilities which relieve the unknown, rose in her breast. Something would surely happen; something would certainly be found to make the exile less heavy, and to bring back a little hope. The little river greeted her like an old friend. “Oh, I remember the Rugas,” she cried. “What a cheery little water! Will they let me fish in it, Dougal? Look how it sparkles! I think it must remember me.”

“It’s just a natural objick,” said Dougal. “It minds naebody; and what would you do—a bit lady thing—fishing troot? Hoots! a crookit pin in a burn would set ye better, a little Miss like you.”

In those days there were no ladies who were salmon fishers. Such a thing would have seemed to Dougal an outrage upon every law.

“Don’t be contemptuous,” said Lily, with a laugh. “You’ll find I am not at all a little Miss. Just give me the reins and let me wake Rory up. I mean to ride him about the moor.”

“I’m doubting if you’ll do that,” said Dougal, with politeness but reserve.

“Why shouldn’t I do it? Perhaps you think I don’t know how to ride. Oh, you can trust Rory to me, or a better than Rory.”

“There’s few better in these parts,” said Dougal, with some solemnity. “He’s a beast that has a

great deal of judgment. He kens well what's his duty in this life. I'm no thinking you'll find it that easy to put him to a new kind of work. He has plenty of his ain work to do."

"We'll see about that," said Lily.

"Ah," replied Dougal, cautiously, "we'll just see about that. We must na come to any hasty judgment. Cheer up, lad! Yon's the half of the road."

"Is this only the half of the road?" said Lily, with a shudder. They were coming out of the deep shade of the woods, and now before them, in its full width and silence, stretched the long levels of the moor. It was even now, in these days before the heather, a beautiful sight, with the mountains towering in the background, and the bushes of the ling, which later in the year would be glorious with blossoms, coming down, mingled with the feathery plumes of the seeding grass, to the very edge of the road: beautiful, wild, alive with sounds of insects, and that thrill of the air which we call silence—silence that could be heard. The wide space, the boundless sky, the freedom of the pure air, gave a certain exaltation to Lily's soul: but at the same time overwhelmed her with a sense of the great loneliness and separation from all human interests which this great vacancy made. "Only half way," she repeated, with a gasp.

"It's a gey lang road, but it's a very good road, with few bad bits. An accustomed person need have nae fear by night or day. There was an ill-place, where ye cross the Rugas again, at the head of the Black Scaur; but it's been mended up just uncommon careful, and ye need have nae apprehension: besides that there's me that ken every step, and Rory that is maist as clever as me."

"But it's the end of the world," Lily said.

"No that, nor even the end of the parish, let alone the countryside," said Dougal. "Its just ignorance, a' that. It's the end o' naething but your journey, and a bonnie place when you're there; and a good dinner waiting for ye; and a grand soft bed, and your grandmither's ain cha'lmers, that was one of the grandest leddies in the North Country. Na, na, Missy, it's no the end of the world. If ye look far ahead, yonder by the east, as soon as we come to the turn of the road, ye'll maybe, if it's clear, see the tower. That's just a landmark over half the parish. Ye'll mind it, Beenie? It's lang or ye've seen so bonnie a sight."

"Oh, ay, I mind it," said Beenie, subdued. She had once thought, with Dougal, that the tower of Dalrugus was a fine sight. But she had tasted the waters of civilization, and the long level of the moor filled her breast, like that of her mistress, with dismay: though, indeed, it was with the eyes of Lily, rather than her own, that the kind woman saw this scene. For herself things would not be so bad. Dougal and Katrin in the kitchen would form a not uncongenial society for Robina. She did not anticipate for herself much difficulty in fitting in again to a familiar place; and she would always have her young mistress to pet and console, and to take care of. But Lily, where would Lily find anything to take her out of herself? Beenie realised, by force of sympathy, the weary gazing from the windows, the vacant landscape, through which no one ever would come, the loneliness indescribable of the great solitary moor: not one of her young companions to come lightly over the heather: neither a lad nor lass in whom the girl would find a playfellow. "Ay, I mind it," said Beenie, shaking her head, with big tears filling her eyes.

Lily, for her part, did not feel disposed to shed any tears—her mind was full of indignation and harsher thoughts. Who could have any right to banish her here beyond sight or meeting of her kind? And it was not less but more bitter to reflect that the domestic tyrant who had banished her was scarcely so much to blame as the lover who would risk nothing to save her. If he had but stood by her—held out his hand—what to Lily would have been poverty or humbleness? She would have been content with any bare lodging in the old town, high among the roofs. She would have worked her fingers to the bone—at least, Beenie would have done so, which was the same thing. That was a sacrifice she would have made willingly: but this that was demanded—who had any right to exact it? and for what was it to be exacted? For money, miserable money; the penny siller that could never buy happiness. Lily's eyes burned like coal. Her cheeks scorched and blazed. Oh, how hard was fate, and how undeserved. For what had she done? Nothing, nothing to bring it upon herself.

It was another long hour before the gig turned the corner by the trees, where there was a momentary view of Dalrugus, and plunged again

between the rising banks, where the road ran in a deep cutting, ascending the last slopes. "We'll be at the house in five minutes," Dougal said.

## CHAPTER VI.

KATRIN stood under the doorway, looking out for the party: a spare, little, active woman, in that native dress of the place, which consisted of a dark woollen skirt and pink "short gown," a garment not unlike the blouse of to-day, bound in by the band of her white apron round a sufficiently trim waist. She was of an age when any vanity of personal appearance, if ever sanctioned at all, is considered, by her grave race, to be entirely out of place: but yet was trim and neat by effect of nature, and wore the shortgown with a consciousness that it became her. A gleam of sunshine had come out, as the two vehicles approached in a little procession: and Katrin had put up her hand to her eyes to shade them from that faint gleam of sun, as she looked down the road. The less of sun there is the more particular people are in shielding themselves from it: which is a mystery, like so many other things in life, small as well as great. Katrin thought the dazzle was overwhelming as she stood looking out under the shadow of her curved hand. The doorway was rather small, and very dark behind her, and the strong gleam of light concentrated in her pink shortgown, and made a brilliant spot of the white cap on her head. And to Katrin the two vehicles climbing the road were as a crowd, and the arrival an event of great excitement, making an era in life. She was interested, perhaps, like her husband, most particularly in Robina, who would be an acquisition to their own society, with all her experience of the grand life of the South: but she bore a warm heart also to the little lady who had been at Dalrugas as a child, and of whose beauty, and specially of whose accomplishments, there had been great reports from the servants in town to the servants on the moor. She hastened forward to place a stool on which Miss Lily could step down, and held out both her hands to help, an offer which was made quite unnecessary by the sudden spring which the girl made, alighting "like a bird" by Katrin's side. "Eh, I didna mind how light a lassie is at your age," cried the housekeeper, startled by that

quick descent. "And are ye very wearied? and have ye had an awfu' journey? and, eh, yonder's Beenie, just the same as ever! I'm as glad to see ye as if I had come into a fortune. Let me take your bit bag, my bonnie lady. Give the things to me."

"Yes, Beenie is just the same as ever—and you also, Katrin, and the moor," said Lily, with a look that embraced them all. She had subdued herself, with a natural instinct of that politeness which comes from the heart, not to show these humble people, on her first arrival, how little she liked her banishment. It was not their fault: they were eager to do their utmost for her, and welcomed her with a kindness which was as near love as any inferior sentiment could be—if it was, indeed, an inferior sentiment at all. But when she stood before the dark doorway, which seemed the end of all things, it was impossible not to betray a little of the loneliness she felt. "And the moor," she repeated. But Katrin heard the words in another sense.

"Ay, my bonnie lamb! the moor, that is the finest sight of a'. It's just beautiful when there's a fine sunset as we're going to have the night to welcome ye hame. Come away ben, my dear; come away in to your ain auld house. Oh! but I'm thankful and satisfied to have ye here!"

"Not my house, Katrin. My uncle would not like to hear you say so."

"Hoot, away! Sir Robert's bark is waur than his bite. What would he have sent such orders for, to make everything sae comfortable, if there had been any doubt that it was your very ain house, and you his chosen heir? If Dougal were to let ye see the letter, a' full of loving kindness, and that he wanted a safe hame for his bit lassie while he was away. Oh, Miss Lily, he's an auld man to be marching forth again at the head of his troop to the wars."

"He is not going to the wars," said Lily. She could not but laugh at the droll supposition. Sir Robert, that lover of comfort and luxury, marching forth on any expedition, unless it were an expedition of pleasure! "There are no wars," she added. "We are at peace with all the world, so far as I can hear."

"Weel, I was wondering," said Katrin. "Dougal, he says, that reads the papers, that there's nae fighting neither in France nor what they

ca'ed the Peninsula in our young days. But he says there are aye wars and rumour of wars in India, and such like places. So we thought it might, maybe, be that. Weel, I'm real content to hear that Sir Robert, that's an old man, is no driven to boot and saddle at his age."

"He is going, perhaps, to London," Lily said.

"Weel, weel, and that's no muckle better than a fight, from a' we hear—an awfu' place, full of a' the scum of the earth. Puir auld gentleman! It maun be the king's business, or else something very important of his ain that takes him there. Anyway, he's that particular about you, my bonnie lady, as never was. You're to have a riding horse when ye please, and Dougal to follow you whenever he can spare the time; and there's a new pianny-fortey come in from Perth, and a box full of books, and I canna tell you all what. And here am I keeping you at the door, hawering all the time. You'll mind the old stair, and the broken step three from the top: or maybe you will like to come into the dining-room first and have a morsel to stay your stomach till the dinner's served: or maybe you would like a drink of milk: or maybe—Lord bless us! she's up the stair like a fire flaught and paying no attention: and, oh, Beenie, my woman, is this you?"

Beenie was more willing to be entertained than her mistress, whose sudden flight upstairs left Katrin stranded in the full tide of her eloquence. She was glad to be set down to a cup of tea and the nice scones, fresh from the girdle, with which the housekeeper had intended to tempt Lily. "I'll cover them up with the napkin to keep them warm, and when ye have taen your cup o' tea ye'll carry some up to her on a tray, or I'll do it myself, with good will: but I mind ye are aye fondest of taking care of your bonnie Miss yoursel'."

"We'll gie her a wee moment to settle down," said Robina: "to take a good greet," was what she said to herself. She swallowed her tea, always with an ear intent on the sounds upstairs. She had seen by Lily's countenance that she was able for no more, and that a moment's interval was necessary; and there she sat consuming her heart, yet perhaps comforted a little by having the good scones to consume, too. "Oh," she said, "ye get nothing like this in Edinburgh: ae scone's very different from another. I have not tasted the like of this for many a year."

"Ye see," said Katrin, with conscious success, "a drop of skim milk like what ye get in a town is very different from the haill cream of a milking; and I'm no a woman to spare pains ony mair than stuff. She's a bonnie, bonnie creature, your young lady, Beenie—a wee like her mother, as far as I mind, that was nothing very much in the way of blood, ye ken, but a bonnie, bonnie young woman as ever stood. The auld leddie and Sir Robert were real mad against Mr. Randall for making such a poor match: but now there's nobody but her bairn to stand atween the house and its end. He'll be rael fond of her, Sir Robert: his bonny wee heir!"

"Ay," said Beenie, "in his ain way."

"Weel, it wasna likely to be in a woman's way like yours or mine. The men they've aye their ain ways of looking at things. I'll warrant there's plenty of lads after her, a bonnie creature like that: and the name of Sir Robert's siller and a'."

"Oh, ay! she hasna wanted for lads," Beenie said.

"And what'll be the reason, Beenie, since the auld gentleman's no going to the wars, as Dougal and me thought—what'll be the reason, are ye thinkin', for the young leddy coming here? He said it was to be safe at hame while he was away."

"Maybe he would be right if that's what he says."

"Oh, Beenie, woman," cried Katrin, "you're secret, secret! Do you think we are no just as keen as you to please our young leddy and make her comfortable? or as taken up to ken why she's been sent away, from a' her parties and pleasurings to bide here?"

"There's no many parties nor pleasurings here for her," said Dougal, joining the two women in the low but airy kitchen, where the big fire was pleasant to look upon, and the brick floor very red, and the hearthstone very white. The door which stood always open afforded a glimpse of the universal background, the everywhere-extending moor, and the air came in keen, though the day was a day in June. Dougal pushed his bonnet to one side to scratch his grizzled head. In these regions, as indeed in many others, it is not necessary to take off one's headgear when one comes indoors. "There's neither lad to run after her, nor leddies to keep her company. If she's light-headed, or the like of that, there canna be a better place than oor moor."



"Light-headed!" said Robina in high scorn. "It just shows how little you ken. And where would I be, a discreet person, if my young leddy was light-headed? She's just as modest and as guid as ever set foot on the heather. My bonnie wee woman! And as innocent as the babe new born."

Dougal pushed his cap to the other side of his head as if that might afford enlightenment. "Then a' I can say is that it's very queer"—and he added after an interval—"I never pretend to understand Sir Robert, he's an awfu' funny man."

"He might play off his fun better than upon Miss Lily," said his wife in anxious tones.

"And that minds me that I'm just hawering here when I should be carrying up the tray," said Beenie. "Some of those cream scones—they're the nicest: and that fine apple jelly is the best I've tasted for long. And now the wee bit teapot, and a good jug of your nice fresh milk that she will, maybe, like better than the tea."

"And my fine eggs—with a yolk like gold, and white that is just like curds and cream."

"Na," said Beenie, waving them away, "that would just be too much: let me alone with the scones, and the milk, and the tea."

She went up the spiral stairs making a cheerful noise with her cups and her tray. A noise was pleasant in this quiet place. Beenie understood without knowing how, that the little clatter, the sound of some one coming, was essential to this new life; and though her arm was very steady by nature, she made everything ring with a little tinkle of cheerfulness and "company." The drawing room of the house, which opened direct from the stairs with little more than a broadened step for a landing, was a large room occupying all the breadth of the tall gable, which was called the tower. It was not high, and the windows were small, set in deep recesses, with spare and dingy curtains. The carpet was of design un conjecturable, and of dark colour worn by use to a deep dinginess of mingled black and brown. The only cheerful thing in the room was a rug before the fireplace, made of strips of coloured cloth, which was Katrin's winter work to beguile the long evenings, and in which the instinct of self preservation had woven many bits of red, relics or patterns of soldier's coats. The eye caught that one spot of colour instinctively. Beenie looked at it as she put down her tray, and Lily had

already turned to it a dozen times, as if there was something good to be got there. The walls were painted in panels of dirty green, and hung with a few pictures, which made the dinginess hideous—staring portraits executed by some country artist, or older relics still, faces which had sunk altogether into the gloom. Three of the windows looked out on the moor, one in a corner upon the yard, where Rory and his companion were stabled, and where there was an audible cackle of fowls, and sometimes Katrin's voice coming and going "as if a door were shut between you and the sound." Lily had been roaming about, as was evident by the cloak flung in one corner, the hat in another, the gloves on the table, the little bag upon the floor. She had gravitated, however, as imaginative creatures do, to the window, and sat there when Beenie entered as if she had been sitting there all her life, gazing out upon the monotonous blank of the landscape and already unconscious of what she saw.

"Well, Miss Lily," said Robina cheerfully, "here we are at last: and thankfu' I am to think that I can sit still the day, and get up in peace the morn without either coach or boat to make me jump. And here's your tea, my bonnie dear—and cream scones, Katrin's best, that I have not seen the like of since I left Kinloch-Rugas. Edinburgh's a grand place, and many a bonnie thing is there; and maybe we'll whiles wish ourselves back; but nothing like Katrin's scones have ye put within your lips for many a day. My dear bonnie bairn, come and sit down comfortable at this nice little table and get your tea."

"Tea!" said Lily; her lips were quivering, so that a laugh was the only escape—or else the other thing. "You mind nothing," she cried, "so long as you have your tea."

"Weel, it makes up for many things, that's true," said Beenie, eager to adopt her young mistress's tone. "Bless me, Miss Lily, it's no the moment to take to that weary window and just stare across the moor when ye ken well there is nothing to be seen. It will be time enough when we're wearied waiting, or when there's any reasonable prospect——"

"What do you mean?" cried Lily, springing up from her seat. "Reasonable prospect—of what, I would like to know? and weary waiting—for whom? How dare you say such silly words to me? I am waiting for nobody," cried Lily, in her

exasperation clapping her hands together, "and there is no reasonable prospect—if it were not to fall from the top of the tower, or sink into the peat-moss some lucky day."

"You're awfu' confident, Miss Lily," said the maid, "but I'm a great deal older than you are, and it would be a strange thing if I had not mair sense. I just tell you there's no saying: and if the Queen of Sheba was here she could utter no more."

"You would make a grand Queen of Sheba," said Lily, with eyes sparkling and cheeks burning, "and what is it your majesty tells me? for I cannot make head nor tail of it for my part."

"I just tell you—there's no saying," Beenie repeated very deliberately, looking the young lady in the face.

Poor Lily! her face was glowing with sudden hope—her slight fingers trembled. What did the woman mean who knew everything? When we're wearied waiting—when there's no reasonable prospect. Oh what, what did the woman mean? Had there been something said to her that could not be said to Lily? Were there feet already on the road, marching hither, hither, bringing love and bringing joy? "There's no saying." A woman like Robina would not say that without some reason. It was enigmatical—but what could it mean but something good: and what good could happen but one thing? Beenie, in fact, meant nothing but the vaguest of consolations—she had no comfort to give: but it was not in a woman's heart to shut out imagination and confess that hope was over. Who would venture to say that there was no hope, any day, any moment, in a young life, of something happening which would make all right again? No oracle could have said less: and yet it meant everything. Lily, in the light of possibility that suddenly sprang up around her, illuminating the moor better than the pale sunshine and making this bare and cold room into a habitable place, took heart to return to the happy ordinary of existence, and remembered that she was hungry and that Katrin's scones were very good and the apple jelly beautiful to behold. It was a prosaic result, you may say, but yet it was a happy one, for she was very tired, and had great need of refreshment and support. She took her simple meal which was so pretty to look at—never an inconsiderable matter on a woman's table—the scones wrapt in their white napkin, the jug of

creamy milk, the glass dish with its clear pink jelly. She ate and drank with much satisfaction, and then, with Beenie at her side, went wandering over the house to see if there was any furniture to be found more cheerful than the curtains and carpets in the drawing-room. The days of "taste" had not arisen—no fans from Japan had yet been seen in England, far less upon the moors: but yet the natural instinct existed to attempt a little improvement in the stiff dullness of the place. Lily was soon running over all the house with a song on her lips—commoner in those days when music was not so carefully cultivated—and a skipping measure in the patter of her feet. "Hear till her," said Dougal to Katrin, "our peace and quiet's done." "Hear till her indeed, ye auld crabbit body! It's the blessing o' the Lord come to the house," said Katrin to Dougal. He pushed his cap now to one side, now to the other, with a scratch of impartial consultation what was to come of it—but also a secret pleasure that brought out a little moisture under his shaggy eyebrows. The old pair sat up a full half hour later, out of pure pleasure in the consciousness of the new inmate under that roof where they had so long abode in silence. And Lily rushed upstairs and downstairs, and thrilled the old floor with her hurried feet, but kept always saying over to herself those words which were the fountain of contentment—or rather expectation, which is better. There's no saying—there's no saying! If Beenie knew nothing in which there was a reasonable hope, how could she have suffered herself to speak?

## CHAPTER VII.

WHEN Lily got up next morning it was to the cheerful sounds of the yard, the clucking of fowls, the voices of the kitchen calling to each other, Katrin darting out a sentence as she came to the door, Dougal growling a bass order to the boy, the sound of whose hissing and movement over his stable work were as steady as if Rory were being groomed like a racer till his coat shone. It is not pleasant to be disturbed by Chanticleer and his handmaidens in the middle of one's morning sleep, nor to hear the swing of the stable pails, and the hoofs of the horses, and the shouts to each other of the outdoor servants. I should not like to have even one window of my bedchamber

exposed to these noises. But Lily sprang up and ran to the window, cheered by this rustic Babel, and looked out with keen pleasure upon the rush of the fowls to Katrin's feet, as she stood with her apron filled with grain, flinging it out in handfuls, and upon the prospect through the stable of the boy hissing and rubbing down Rory, who clattered with his impatient hoofs and would not stand still to have his toilet made. Dougal was engaged in the byre, in some more important operations with the cow, whose present hope and representative—a weak-kneed, staggering calf—looked out from the door with that solemn stare of wondering imbecility, which is often so pathetic. Lily did not think of pathos. She was cheered beyond measure to look out on all this active life, instead of the silent moor. The world was continuing to go round all the same: the creatures had to be fed: the new day had begun—notwithstanding that she was banished to the end of the world: and this was no end of the world after all, but just a corner of the country, where life kept going on all the same, whether a foolish little girl had been to a ball overnight, or had arrived in solitude and tears at the scene of her exile. A healthful nature has always some spring in it at the opening of a new day.

She went over the place under Katrin's guidance, when she had dressed and breakfasted, and was as ready to be amused and diverted as if she had found everything going her own way: which shows that Lily was no young lady heroine, but an honest girl of nineteen, following the impulses of nature. The little establishment at Dalrugas was not a farm. It had none of the fluctuations, none of the anxieties, which befall a humble agriculturist who has to make his living out of a few not very friendly acres, good year and bad year together. Dougal loved indeed to grumble when any harm came over the potatoes, or when his hay was spoilt, as it generally was, by the rain. He liked to pose as an unfortunate farmer, persecuted by the elements: but the steady wages which Sir Robert paid, with the utmost regularity, were as a rock at the back of this careful couple, whose little harvest was for the sustenance of their little household, and did not require to be sold to produce the ready money of which they stood so very little in need. Therefore, all was prosperous in the little place. The eggs, indeed, produced so

plentifully, were not much profit in a place where everybody else produced eggs in their own barn-yards; but a sitting from Katrin's fowls was much esteemed in the country-side, and brought her honour and sometimes a pleasant present in kind, which was to the advantage both of her comfort and self-esteem. But a calf was a thing which brought in a little money: and the milk formed a great part of the living of the house in various forms, and when there was any over, did good to the poor folk who are always with us, on the banks of the Rugas, as in other places. Dougal would talk big by times about his losses—a farmer, however small, is nothing without them: but his loss sat very lightly on his shoulders, and his comfort was great and his little gains very secure. The little steading which lurked behind Sir Robert's grey house, and was a quite unthought-of adjunct to it, did very well in all its small traffic and barter under such conditions. The mission of Dougal and his wife was to be there, always ready to receive the master when he chose to "come North," as they called it, with the shooting party, for whom Katrin always kept her best sheets well aired. But Sir Robert had no mind to trust himself in the chilly North: that was all very well when a man was strong and active and liked nothing so much as to tramp the moor all day, and keep his friends at heck and manger. But a man's friends get fewer as he gets old, and other kinds of pleasure attract him. It was perhaps a dozen years since he had visited his spare paternal house. And Dougal and Katrin had come to think the place was theirs, and the cocks and hens, and the cows and ponies, the chief interest in it. But they were no niggards: they would have been glad to see Sir Robert himself had he come to pay them a visit: they were still more glad to see Lily, and to make her feel herself the Princess, or it might be altogether more correct to say the Suzerain, under whom they reigned. They did not expect her to interfere, which made her welcome all the more warm. As for Sir Robert, he might perhaps have interfered: but even in the face of that doubt, Dougal and Katrin would have acted as became them, and received him with a kindly welcome.

"Ye see this is where I keep the fowls," said Katrin. "It was a kind of a gun-room, once; but

it's a place where a shootin' gentleman never sets his fit, and there's no a gun fired but Dougal's auld carabeen. What's the use of keeping up thae empty places, gaun to rack and ruin, with grand names till them? The sitting hens are just awfu' comfortable in here; and as for Cockmaleerie, he mairches in and mairches out, like Mr. Smeaton, the schoolmaster, that has five daughters, besides his wife, and takes his walks at the head of them. A cock is wonderful like a man. If you just saw the way auld Smeaton turns his head, and flings a word now and then at the chattering creatures after him! We've put the pig sty out here. It's no just the place, perhaps, so near the house; but its real convenient; and as the wind is maistly from the east, ye never get any smell to speak of. Besides, that's no the kind of smell that does harm. The black powny he's away to the moor for peat; but there's Rory, aye taking another rug at his provender. He's an auld farrant beast. He's just said to himself, as you or me might do: 'Here's a stranger come, and I am the carriage horse; and let's just make the most of it.'

"He must be very conceited, if he thinks himself a carriage horse," said Lily, with a laugh.

"Deed, and he's the only ane; and no a bad substitute. As our auld minister said, the day yon young lad was preaching: 'No a bad substitute.' I trow no, seeing he's now the assistant and successor, and very well likit; and if it could only be settled between him and Miss Eelen, there could be naething more to be desired. But that's no the question. About Rory, Miss Lily—"

"I would much rather hear about Miss Helen. Who is Miss Helen? is it the minister's little girl that used to come out to Dalrugas to play with me?"

"She's a good ten years older than you, Miss Lily."

"I don't think so. I was—how old? nine; and I am sure she was not grown up, nor anything like it. And so she can't make up her mind to take the assistant and successor? Tell me, Katrin, tell me! I want to hear all the story. It is something to find a story here."

"There are plenty of stories," said Katrin; "and I'll tell you everyone of them; but about Miss Eelen. She's a very little thing. You at nine were bigger than she was—let us say—at sixteen. There maun be seven years atween

you, and now she'll be six and twenty. No, it's no auld—and she's but a bairn to look at: and she will just be a fine friend for you, Miss Lily: for though they're plain folk, she has been real well brought up, and away at the school in Edinburgh, and plays the pianny, and a' that kind of thing. I have mair opinion mysel' of a good seam; but we canna expect everybody to have that sense."

"And why will she have nothing to say to the assistant and successor? and what is his name?"

"His name is Douglas, James Douglas, of a westland family, and no that ill-looking, and well likit. Eh, but you're keen of a story, Miss Lily, like a' your kind. But I never said she would have naething to say to him. She is just great friends with him. They are aye plotting together for the poor folk, as if there was nothing needed but a minister and twa-three guid words to make heaven on earth. Oh, my bonnie lady! if it could be done as easy as that! There's that drunken body, Johnny Wright, that keeps the merchant's shop." Katrin was a well educated woman in her way, and never put *f* for *w*, which is the custom of her district; but she said *chop* for *shop*, an etymology which it is unnecessary to follow here. "But it's a good intention—a good intention. They are aye plotting how they are to mend their neighbours; and the strange thing is—But dear, bless us! what are we to be hivering about other folks' weakness, when nae doubt we have plenty of our ain."

"I am not to be cheated out of my story, Katrin. Do you mean that the young minister is not a good man himself?"

"Bless us, no! that's not what I mean. He's just as pious a lad and as weel living—it's no that—it's no that. It's just one o' thae mysteries that you're far o'er young to understand. She's been keen to mend other folk, poor lass; and that the minister should speak to them, and show them the error o' their ways! But the dreadful thing is that her poor bit heart is just bound up in a lad—a ne'er-do-weel, that is the worst of them all. Oh, dinna speak of it, Miss Lily, dinna speak of it! I'll tell you anither time; or, maybe, I'll no tell ye at all. Come in and see the kye. They're honest creatures. There's nothing o' the deevil and his dreadful ways in them."

"I wouldna be ower sure of that," said Dougal, who came to meet them to the door of the byre,

his cap hanging on to the side of his head, upon one grizzled lock, so many pushes and scratches had it received in the heat of his exertions. "There's Crummie, just as little open to *raison* as if she were a wuman. No a step will she budge, though it's clean strae and soft lying that I'm offering till her. Gang ben, and try what ye can do. She's just furious. I canna tell what she thinks, bucking at me, and butting at me, as if I was gaun to carry her off to the butcher, instead of just setting her bed in comfort for her trouble. None of the deil in them! What d'ye say to Rory? He's a deil a' thegither, from the crown of his head to his off leg, the little evil spirit! And what's that muckle cock ye're so proud o'? Just Satan incarnate, that's my opinion, stampin' out his ain progeny, when they're o' the same sect as himsel'. Dinna you trust to what she says, Miss Lily. There's nae place in this world where *he* is not gaun about like a roarin' lion, seekin', as the Scripture saith, whom he may devour."

"Eh, man," said his wife, coming out a little red, yet triumphant, "but you're a poor hand with your doctrines and your opinions! A when soft words in poor Crummie's ear, and a clap upon her bonnie broad back, poor woman, and she's as quiet as a lamb. Ye've been tugging at her, and swearing at her, though I aye tell ye no. Fleeching is aye better than fechtin', if ye would only believe me—whether it's a woman, or a bairn, or a poor timorsome coo."

"Ye're a' alike," said Dougal, with a grunt, returning to his work. "I'm thinking," he said, pausing to deliver his broadside, "that, saving your presence, Miss Lily, weemen are just what ye may call the head of the irrational creation. It's men that's a little lower than the angels; we're them that are made in the image of God. But when ye speak o' the whole creation that groaneth and travaileth, I'm thinking——"

"Ye'll just think at your work, and haud your ill tongue before the young lady," cried his wife, in high wrath. But she, too, added, as he swung away with a big laugh, "Onyway, by your ain comparison, we're at the head and you're at the tail. Come away, Miss Lily, and see the bonnie doos. There is nae ill-speaking among them. I'm no so sure," she added, however, when out of hearing of her husband, "I've heard yon muckle cushat, the one with the grand ruff about his

neck, swearin' at his bonnie wifie, or else I'm sair mistaen. It's just in the nature o' the men-kind. They like ye weel enough, but they maun aye be gibing at ye, and jeerin' at ye—but, bless me, a bit young thing like you, it's no to be expectit ye could understand."

The pigeons were very tame, and alighted not only on Katrin's capacious shoulders, who "shoo'd" them off, but on Lily's, who liked the sentiment, and to find herself so familiarly accosted by creatures so highly elevated above mere cocks and hens—"the bonnie creatures," as Katrin said, who sidl'd and bridl'd about her, with mincing steps and graceful movements. "The doocot" was an old grey tower, standing apart from the barn-yard, in a small field, the traditional appendage of every old Scotch house of any importance. To come upon Rory afterwards, dragging after him the boy, by name Sandy, and not unlike, either in complexion or shape, to the superior animal whom he was supposed to be taking out for exercise—brought back, if not the former discussion on the prevalence of evil, at least a practical instance of "the deevil" that was in the pony, and was an additional amusement. Lily made instant trial of the feminine ministrations which had been so effective with the cow, whispering in Rory's ear, and stroking his impatient nose, without, however, any marked effect.

"He'll soon get used to ye," Katrin said consolingly, "and then you'll can ride him down to the town, and make your bit visits, and get anything that strikes your fancy at the shop. Oh, you'll find there's plenty to divert ye, my bonnie leddy, when once ye are settled down."

Would it be so? Lily felt, in the courage of the morning, that it might be possible. She resolved to be good, as a child resolves: there should be no silly despair, no brooding, nor making the worst of things. She would interest herself in the beasts and the birds, in Rory, the pony, and Crummie, the cow. She would always have something to do. Her little school accomplishment of drawing, in which she had made some progress, according to the drawing master, she would take that up again. The kind of drawing Lily had learnt consisted in little more than copying other drawings: but that, when it had been carefully done, had been thought a great deal of

at school ; and then there was the fine fancy work which had been taught her—the wonderful things in Berlin wool—which was adapted to so many purposes, and occupied so large a share of feminine lives. Miss Martineau, that strong-minded politician and philosopher, amused her leisure with it, and why should not Lily ? But Berlin patterns, and all the beautiful shades of the wool, could not, alas ! be had on Dalrugas moor. Lily decided bravely that she would knit stockings at least, and that practice would soon overcome that difficulty about turning the heel, which had damped her early efforts. She would knit warm stockings for Sir Robert—warm and soft as he liked them—ribbed so as to cling close to his handsome old leg, and show its proportions, and so, perhaps, touch his heart. And then there would, no doubt, turn up, from time to time, something to do for the poor folk. Surely, surely there would be employment enough to “keep her heart.” Then she would go to Kinloch-Rugas and see “Miss Eelen,” Helen Blythe, the minister’s daughter, whom she remembered well, with the admiration of a little girl for one much older than herself. Here was something that would interest her and occupy her mind, and prevent her from thinking. And then there were the old books in the library, in which she feared there would be little amusement, but probably a great many good books that she had not read, and what a fine opportunity for her to improve her mind ! Her present circumstances were quite usual features in the novels before the age of Sir Walter : a residence in an old castle or other lonely house, where a persecuted heroine had the best of reading, and emerged quite an accomplished woman, was the commonest situation. She said to herself that there would be plenty to do : that she would not leave a moment without employment : that her life would be too busy and too full to leave any time for gazing out at that window, watching the little bit of road, and looking, looking for someone who never came. Having drawn up this useful programme, and decided how she was to spend every day, Lily, poor Lily, all alone, even Beenie having gone downstairs for a long talk with Katrin—seated herself, quite unconsciously, at the window, and gazed, and gazed without intermission, at the little corner of the road that climbed the brae, and across the long level of the unbroken moor.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE days that succeeded were very much like this first day. In the morning Lily went out “among the beasts” and visited, with all the interest she could manage to excite in herself, the byre and the stable, the ponies and the cows. She persuaded herself into a certain amusement in contrasting the very different characters of Rory, the spoiled and superior, with that little sturdy performer of duty without vagary, who had not even a name to bless himself with, but was to all and sundry the black powny and no more. Poor little black powny, he supported Rory’s airs without a word ; he gave in to the fact that he was the servant and his stable companion the gentleman. He went to the moor for peat, and to the howe for potatoes, and to the town for whatever was wanted, without so much as a toss of his shaggy head. Nothing tired the black powny, any more than anything ever tired the “buoy” who drove, and fed and groomed him, as much grooming as he ever had. Sandy was “the buoy” just as his charge was the black powny. They went everywhere together, lived together, it was thought even slept together : and though the “buoy” in reality occupied the room above the stable, which was entered by a ladder, the loft, in common parlance—the two shaggy creatures were as one. All these particulars Lily learned, and tried to find a little fun, a little diversion in them. But it was a thin vein and soon exhausted, at least by her pre-occupied mind.

The post came seldom to this place at the end of the world. It never indeed came at all. When there were other errands to do in the village, the buoy and the black powny called at the post office to ask for letters—when they remembered : but very often Sandy did not mind, *i.e.*, recollect to do this, and it did not matter much. Sir Robert, indeed, had made known his will that there were to be no letters, and correspondence was sluggish in those days. Lily had not bowed her spirit to the point of promising that she would not write to whomsoever she pleased, but she was too proud to be the first to do so, and, save a few girl epistles for which, poor child, she did not care, and which secured her only a succession of disappointments, nothing came to lighten her solitude. No, she would not write first, she would not tell him her address. He could soon

find that out if he wanted to find it. Sir Robert Ramsay was not nobody, that there should be any trouble in finding out where his house was, however far off it might be. Poor Lily, when she said this to herself, did not really entertain a doubt that Ronald would manage to write to her. But he did not do so. The post came in at intervals, the powny and the boy went to the town, and minded or did not mind to call for the letters: but what did it matter when no letters ever came? Ah, one from Sir Robert, hoping she found the air of the moor beneficial, one from a lighthearted schoolfellow, narrating all the dances there had been since Lily went away, and the last new fashion, and how like Alice Scott it was to be the first to appear in it. But no more. This foolish little epistle, at first dashed on the ground in her disappointment, Lily went over again, through every line, to see whether somewhere in a corner there did not lurk the name which she was sick with longing to see. It might so easily have been here—"I danced with Ronald Lumsden and he was telling me," or, "Ronald Lumsden called and was asking about you." Such a crumb of refreshment as that Lily would have been glad of: but it never came.

Yet she struggled bravely to keep up her heart. One of those early days, after sundry attempts on the moor, where she gradually vanquished him, Lily rode Rory into Kinloch-Rugas with only a few controversies on the way. She was light and she was quiet, making no clattering at his heels as the gig did, and by degrees Rory habituated himself to the light burden and the moderate amount of control which she exercised over him. It amused him after a while to see the whisk of her habit, which proved to be no unknown drag or other mechanism, but really a harmless thing, not heavy at all—and as she gave him much of his own way, and lumps of sugar and no whip to speak of, he became very soon docile, as docile as his nature permitted, and gave her only as much trouble as amused Lily. They went all the way to the town together, an incongruous but friendly pair, he pausing occasionally when a very tempting mouthful of emerald green grass appeared among the bunches of ling, she addressing him with amiable remonstrances as Dougal did, and eventually touching his point of honour or sense of shame so that he made a little burst of unaccustomed speed, and got over a good deal of ground in the

stimulus thus applied. He was not like the trim and glossy steeds on which, with her long habit reaching half way to the ground and a careful groom behind, Lily had ridden out with Sir Robert, in the days of her grandeur, which already seemed so far off. But she was, perhaps, quite as comfortable in the Tweed skirt in which she could spring unfettered from Rory's back and move about easily without yards of heavy cloth to carry. The long habit and the sleek steed and the groom turned out to perfection would have been out of place on the moor; but Rory, jogging along with his rough coat and his young mistress in homespun, were entirely appropriate to the landscape.

It required a good many efforts, however, before the final code of amity was established between them, the rule of bearing and forbearing, which encouraged Lily to so long a ride. When she slipped off his back at the Manse door, Rory tossed his shaggy head with an air of relief, and looked as if he might have set off home immediately to save himself further trouble: but he thought better of it after a moment and a few lumps of sugar, and was soon in the careful hands of the minister's man, who was an old and intimate friend, and on the frankest terms of remonstrance and advice. Lily was not by any means so familiar in the minister's house. She went through the little ragged shrubbery where the big straggling lilac bushes were all bare and brown, and the berries of the rowan trees beginning to redden, but everything unkempt and ungracious, the stems burnt and the leaves blown away before their time by an unfriendly wind. The monthly rose upon the house made a good show with its delicate blossoms, looking far too fragile for such a place, yet triumphant in its weakness over more robust flowers: and a still more fragile-looking but tenacious and indestructible plant, the great white bindweed or wild convolvulus covered the little porch with its graceful trails of green, and delicate flowers, which last so short a time, yet form so common a decoration of the humblest Highland cottages. Lily paused to look through the light lines of the climbing verdure as she knocked at the Manse door. It was so unlike anything that could be expected to bloom and flourish in the keen northern air. It gave her a sort of consoling sense that other things as unlike the sternness of

the surroundings might be awaiting her, even here, at the end of the world.

And nothing could have been more like the monthly rose on the dark, grey wall of the Manse, than Helen Blythe, who came out of the homely parlour to greet Lily when she heard who the visitor was. "Miss Eelen" was Lily's senior by even more than had been supposed, but she did not show any sign of mature years. She was very light of figure and quick of movement, with a clear little morning face extremely delicate in colour, mild brown eyes that looked full of dew and freshness, and soft brown hair. She came out eagerly, her "seam" in her hand, a mass of whiteness against her dark dress, saying, "Miss Ramsay, Dalrugus?" with a quick interrogative note—and then Helen threw down her work and held out both her hands. "Oh, my bonnie little Lily," she cried, in sweet familiar tones. "And is it you? and is it really you?"

"I think I should have known you anywhere," said Lily, "you are not changed—not changed a bit: but I am not little Lily any longer. I am a great deal bigger than you."

"You always were, I think," said Helen, "though you were only a bairn and me a little, little woman, nearly a woman, when you were here last. Come ben my dear, come ben and see papa. He does not move about much or he would have come to welcome you. But wait a moment till I get my seam, and till I find my thimble—it's fallen off my finger in the fulness of my heart, for I could not bide to think about that when I saw it was you. And oh, stand still, my dear, or you'll tramp upon it!—and it's my silver thimble and not another nearer than Aberdeen."

"I've got one," cried Lily, "and you shall have it, Helen, for I fear, I fear it is not so very much use to me."

"Oh, whisht, my dear. You must not tell me you don't like your seam. How would the house go on, and what would folk do without somebody to sew? For my part I could not live without my seam. Canny, canny, my bonnie woman, there it is! They are just dreadful things for running into corners—almost as bad as a ring. But there is a mischief about a ring that is not in a thimble," said Helen, rising, with her soft cheeks flushed, having rescued the errant thimble from the floor.

"And are you always at your seam?" said Lily,

"just as you were when I was little, and you used to come to Dalrugus to play?"

"I don't think you were ever so little as me," said Helen, with her rustic idiom and accent, her low voice and her sweet look, both as fresh as the air upon the moor. She did not reach much higher than Lily's shoulder. She had the most serene and smiling face, full, one would have said, of genuine ease of heart. Was this so? or was her mind full, as Katrin had said, of unhappy love and anxious thoughts? But it was impossible to believe so, looking at this soft countenance—the mouth which had not a line, and the eyes which had not a care.

Nowadays the humblest dwelling which boasts two rooms to sit in, possesses a dining room and drawing room: but at that period drawing rooms were for grand houses only, and the parlour was the name of the family dwelling place. It was very dingy, if truth must be told. The furniture was of heavy mahogany, with black haircloth. Though it was still high summer, there was a fire in the old-fashioned black grate, and close beside, in his black easy chair, was the minister—a heavy old man with a bad leg, who was no longer able to get about, and indeed did very little save criticise the actions of his assistant and successor—a man of new-fangled ways and ideas unlike his own. He had an old plaid over his shoulders, for he was chilly, and a good deal of snuff hanging about the lapels of his coat. His countenance was large and fresh coloured, and his hair white. In those days it was not the fashion to wear a beard.

"So that's Miss Lily from the town," he said. "Come away ben, come ben. Set a chair by the fire for the young lady, Eelen, for she'll be cold coming off the moor. It's always a cold bit, the moor. Many a cough I've catched there when I was more about the country-side than I am now. Old age and a meeserable body are sore hindrances to getting about. Ye know neither of them, my young friend, and I hope you'll never know!"

"Well, papa, it is to be hoped Lily will live to be old: for most folk desires it," said Helen—papa, a harsh reporter would have considered her to say, but it was not so broad as a w; it was more like two a's—papaa—which she really said. She smiled very benignantly upon the old gentleman, and the young creature whom he accosted. The name of gout was never mentioned—was indeed



considered an unholy thing, the product of port wine and made dishes, and not to be laid to the account of a clergyman. But Mr. Blythe contemplated with emotion, supported on his footstool, the dimensions of a much swollen toe.

"Well," said he, "I hope she'll never live to have the rose in her foot, or any other ailment of the kind. And how's Sir Robert, my dear? Him and me are neighbourlike: there is not very much between us: is he coming north this year to have a pop at the birds, or is he thinking like me, I wonder, that a good easy chair by the fire is the best thing for an auld man? and a brace of grouse well cooked and laid upon a toast more admirable than any number of them on the moor?"

"I don't think he is coming for the shooting," said Lily, doubtful. Sir Robert was in many respects what was then called a dandy, and anything more unlike the exquisite arrangements for his comfort, carried out by his valet, than the old clergyman's black cushion and footstool and smouldering fire could not be.

"You'll have had an illness yourself," said the minister, "though you do not look like it, I must say, does she now, Eelen, with a colour like that? But your uncle would have done better, my dear, to take you travelling, or some place where ye would have seen a little society and young persons like yourself, than to send you here. He'll maybe have forgotten what a quiet place it is, and no fit for the like of you. But I'll let him know, I'll let him know as soon as he comes up among us, which no doubt he will soon do now."

"Now, papa," said Helen, "you will just let Sir Robert alone, and no plot with him to carry Lily away from me: for I am counting very much upon her for company, and it will do her no harm to get the air of the moor for a while and forget all the dissipations of Edinburgh. You will have to tell me all about them, Lily, for I'm the country mouse that has never been away from home. Eh," said Helen, "I have no doubt everything is far grander when you're far off from it than when you're near. I daresay you were tired of the Edinburgh parties, and I would just give a great deal to see one of them. And most likely you thought the Tower would be delightful, while we are only thinking how dull it will be for you. That is aye the way: what we have we think little of, and what we have not we desire."

"I was not tired," said Lily, "except sometimes of the grand dinners that Uncle Robert is so fond of: and I cannot say that I expected the Tower to be delightful, but you know I have no father of my own, and I must just do what I am told."

"My dear," said the old minister, "I see you have a fine judgment: for if you had a father of your own, like Eelen there, you would just turn him round your little finger: and I'm much surprised you don't do the same, a fine creature like you, with your uncle too."

"Whisht, papa," said Helen, "we'll have in the tea which you know you're always fond of to get a cup when you can, and it'll be a refreshment to Lily after her ride. And in the meantime you can tell her some of your stories to make her laugh, for a laugh's a fine thing for a young creature whatsoever it's about—if it's only havers."

"Which my auld stories are, ye think?" said the minister. "Go away, go away and mask your tea. Miss Lily and me will get on very well without you. I'll tell ye no stories. They are all very old, and the most of them are printed. If I were to entertain ye with my anecdotes of auld ministers and beadles and the like, ye would perhaps find them again in a book, and ye would say to yourself, 'Eh, there's the story Mr. Blythe told me, as if it was out of his own head'—and you would never believe in me more. But for all that it's no test being in a book; most of mine are in books, and yet they are mine, and it was me that put them together all the same. But I have remarked that our own concerns are more interesting to us than the best of stories, and I'm a kind of spiritual father to you, my dear. If I did not christen you, I christened your father. Tell me, now that Eelen's out of the way, what is it that brought ye here? Is it something about a bonnie lad, my bonnie young lass? for that's the commonest cause of banishment, and, as it cannot be carried out with the young man, it's the poor wee lassies that have the brunt to bear——"

"I never said," cried Lily, angry tears coming to her eyes, "that there was any reason or that it was for punishment. I just came here because—because—Uncle Robert wanted me to come," she added, in a little burst of indignation, yet dignity, "and nobody that I know has a right to say a word."

"Just so," said Mr. Blythe, "he wanted you,

no doubt, to give an eye to Dougal and Katrin, who might be taking in lodgers or shooting the moors for their own profit for anything that he can tell. He's an auld farrant chield, Sir Robert. He would not say a word to you, but he would reckon that you would find out."

"Mr. Blythe," cried Lily, with fresh indignation. "if you think my uncle sent me here for a spy, to find out things that do not exist——"

"No my dear, I don't, I don't," said the minister. "I am satisfied he has a mind above that, and you too. But he's not without a thread of suspicion in him: indeed he's like most men of his years and experience, and believes in nobody. No, no, Dougal does not put the moor to profit, which might be a temptation to many men: but he has plenty of sport himself in a canny way, and there's a great deal of good game just wasted. You may tell Sir Robert that from his old friend. Just a great deal of good game wasted. He should come and bring a few nice lads to divert you, and shoot the moor himself."

"That's just one of papa's crazes," said Helen, returning with her teapot in her hand, the tray, with all its jingling cups and saucers, having been put on the table in the meantime. "He thinks the gentlemen should come back from wherever they are, or whatever they may be doing, to shoot the moors. It would certainly be far more cheery for the countryside, but very likely Sir Robert cares nothing about the moor, and is just content with the few brace of grouse that Dougal sends him. I believe it's considered a luxury and something grand to put on the table in other places, but we have just too much of it here. Now, draw to the table and take your tea. The scones are just made, and I can recommend the shortbread, and you must be wanting something after your ride. I have told John to give the powny a feed, and you will feel all the better, the two of you, for a little rest and refreshment. Draw in to the table, my bonnie dear."

These were before the days of afternoon tea; but the institution existed more or less, though not in name, and "the tea" was administered before its proper time or repeated with a sense of guilt in many houses, where the long afternoon was the portion of the day which it was least easy to get through—when life was most languid, and occupation at a lull. Lily ate her shortbread with

a girl's appetite, and took pleasure in her visit. When she mounted Rory again and set forth on her return, she asked herself with great wonder whether it was possible that there could be anything under that soft aspect of Helen Blythe—her serene countenance and delicate colour, which could in any way correspond with the trouble and commotion in her own young bosom? Helen had indeed her father to care for, she was at home, and had, no doubt, friends: but was it possible that a thought of some one who was not there lay at the bottom of all?

Lily confessed to Robina when she got home that she had been much enlivened by her visit and that Helen was coming to see her, and that all would go well; but when Beenie, much cheered went downstairs to her tea, Lily unconsciously drew once more to that window, that watch-tower, from which nobody was ever visible. The moor lay in all the glory of the evening, already beginning to warm and glow with the heather, every bud of which awoke to brightness in the long rays of the setting sun. It was as if it came to life as the summer days wore towards autumn. The mountains stood round, blue and purple, in their unbroken veil of distance and visionary greatness, but the moor was becoming alive and full of colour, warming out of all bleakness and greyness into life and light. The corner of the road under the trees showed like a peep into a real world, not a dreary vacancy from which no one came. There was a cart slowly toiling its way up the slope, its homely sound as it came on, informing the silence of something moving, neighbourly, living. Lily smiled unconsciously as if it had been a friend. And when the cart had passed, there appeared a figure, alone, walking quickly, not with the slow wading, as if among the heather, of the rare, ordinary passer by. Lily's interest quickened in spite of herself as she saw the wayfarer breasting the hill. Who could he be, she wondered. Some sportsman, come for the grouse—some gentleman, trained not only to moorland walking, but to quick progress over smoother roads. He skimmed along under the fir trees at the corner, up the little visible ascent. Lily almost thought she could hear his steps sounding so lightly—like a half-forgotten music that she was glad, glad to hear again: but he disappeared soon under the rising bank as everything did, and she

was once more alone in the world. The sun sank, the horizon turned grey, the moor became once more a wilderness in which no life or movement was.

No! what a jump her heart gave! it was no wilderness: here was the same figure again, stepping out on the moor. It had left the road, it was coming on with springs and leaps over the heather

towards the house. Who was it? Who was it? And then he, he! held up his hand and beckoned, beckoned to Lily in the wilderness. Who was he? Nobody—a wandering traveller, a sportsman, a stranger. Her heart beat so wildly that the whole house seemed to shake with it. And there he stood among the heather, his hat off, waving it, and beckoning to her with his hand.

*(To be continued.)*

## AUTUMN.

THERE is no sun at all;

Windy the garden is, and bleak the meadow;

The sky is like a heavy wall of shadow

Above the grey stone wall.

There are no flowers. Astray

The creeper swings—of crimson all bereft:

The last pale roses that October left

Were gathered yesterday.

There are no green leaves now:

And where the nightingale enchanted hung,

And golden bees upon the lime flowers swung,

Is left the naked bough.

Yet through a summer land

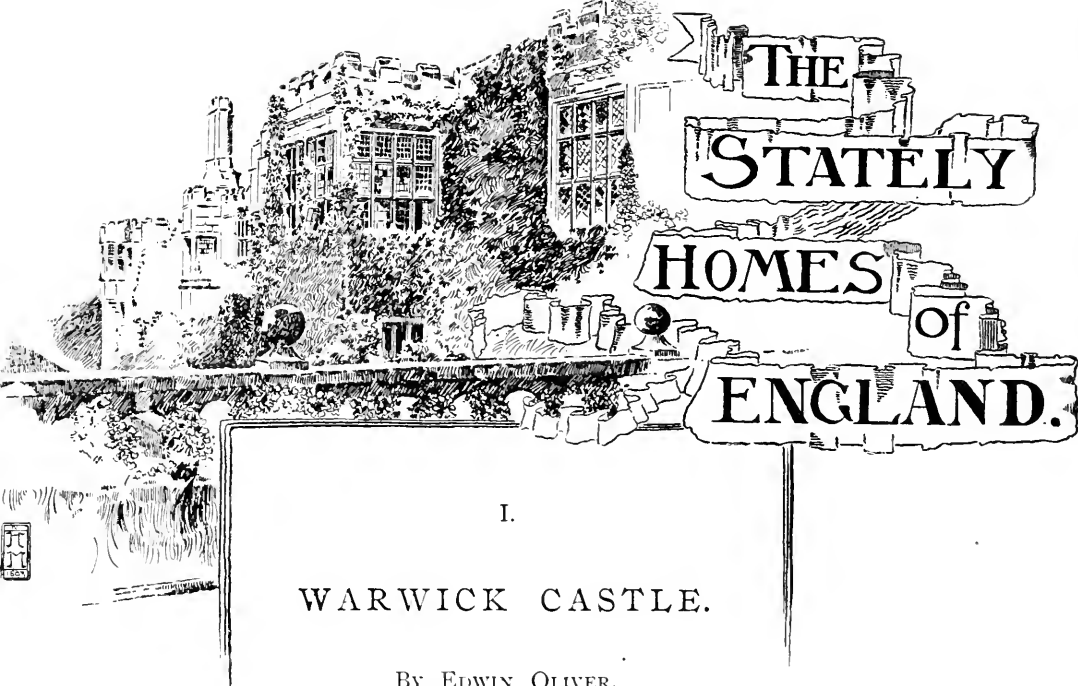
We walk still—still pluck all the flowers of Spring.

To us the nightingales their June songs sing,

As we go hand in hand.

E. NESBIT.



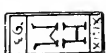
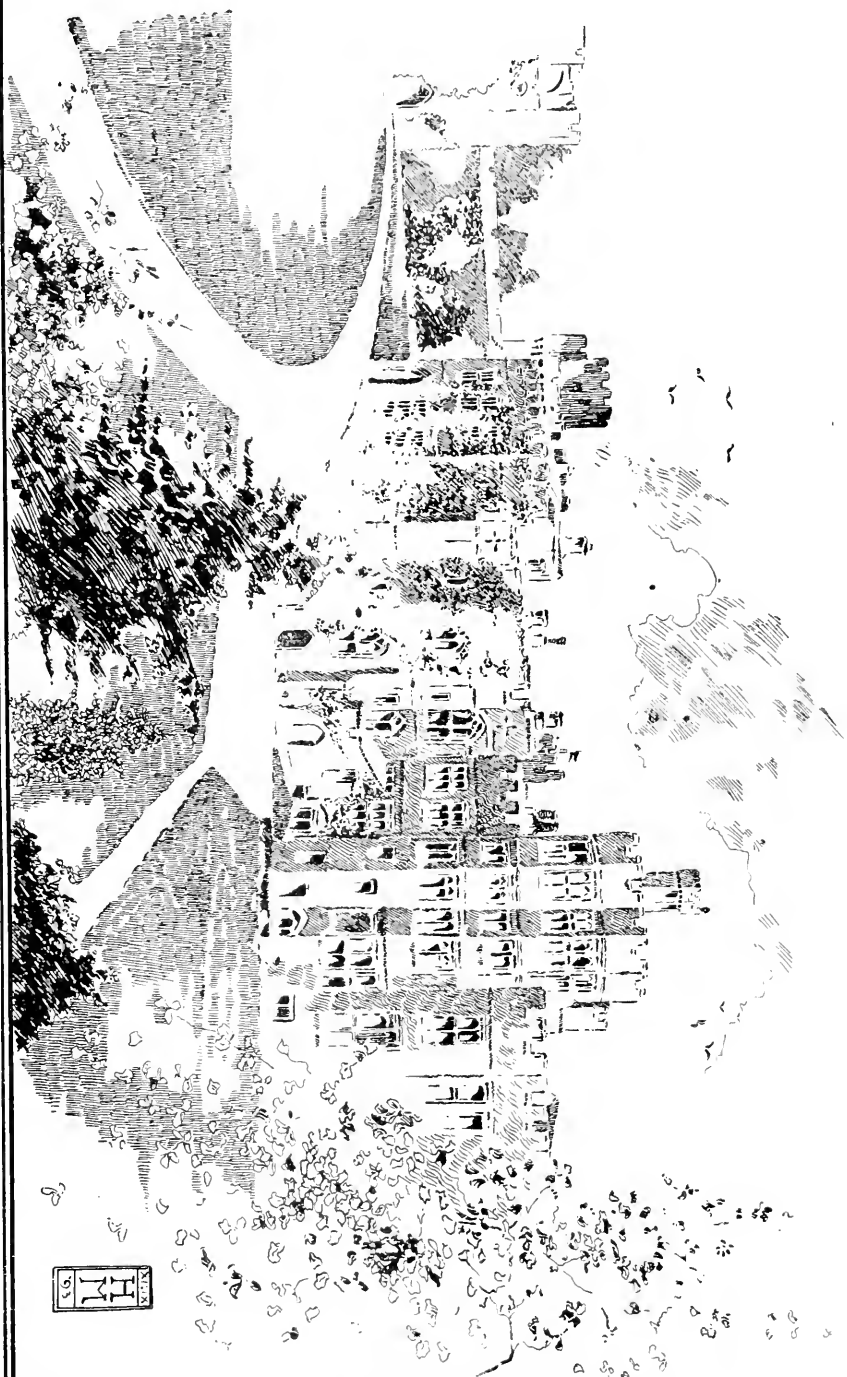


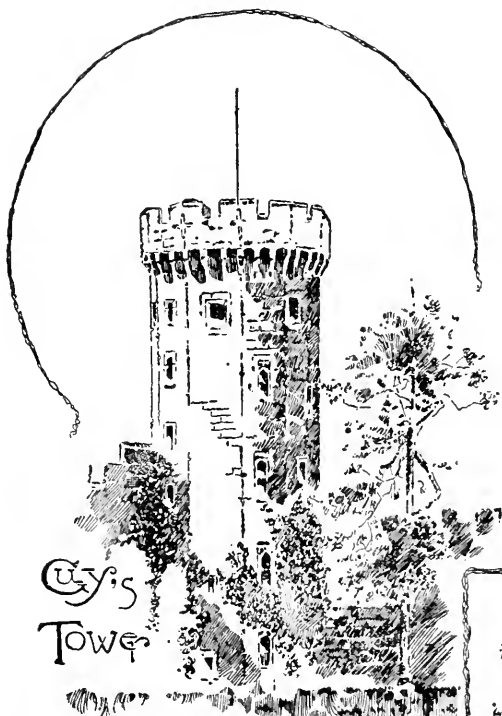
HOW much the romance of history owes to the mighty pile whose turrets frown upon the town of Warwick, is only realised when one sees the part it played in the chronicles of the past. It stands as a landmark in the story of the centuries, around which the tendrils of events have entwined themselves so thickly that the two are merged in one, and the lines of individuality are lost. What a motley crowd people the precincts to the gaze of the dreamer! Along yon meadow marches the great Guy, not flushed with the downfall of the mighty Dane, but in penitential weeds of the sins of a mis-spent manhood. Upon the battlements above stands "the black dogge of the den," the symbol of a feudalism that is dead, and before the gates the "King-maker" marshalls his troops, to dazzle the House of York. How quickly they pass in their mourning robes, for the shadow of the axe falls across the bulk of them. Some stand out by reason of the greater tragedy of their fate. Here is the false, frivolous Clarence, followed by the hapless Isabel Neville and her gentler sister Anne, while, with firm, noiseless tread, the master-spirit of the group brings up the rear, the crook-backed Gloucester. On they go, and another race succeeds them, the Dudleys,

as ill-fated as themselves. Guildford and his martyred wife, Lady Jane—those puppets worked by the hand of the terrible Duke, who gambled for a crown with the fairest flower of patrician England. To trace their several fortunes would be impossible in so brief a sketch, but let us choose a few of the scenes that have been enacted on this historic ground, and of the great dead who have dwelt there.

The neighbourhood abounds in trophies of the mythical Earl Guy. Legend assigns him to the reign of Saxon Athelstan, who, with the valour of his grandsire, is contending for his kingdom, inch by inch, against the Danish hordes. The foe has laid waste the land as far west as Winchester, and, drunk with success, proposes three alternatives to the English king—first, that he should resign his crown to the invaders; second, that he should hold the land from them, or third, that a champion of each side should decide the issue in single combat. The last proposition is preferred, but though the Danes send out the monster Saracen, Colbrand, to do battle for them, not one of Athelstan's warriors is found hardy enough to risk his life. Now the king has had a vision in which it is foretold that the realm shall be saved by the first pilgrim that may chance to pass. At the moment of dilemma,

# THE COURT-YARD : WARWICK CASTLE





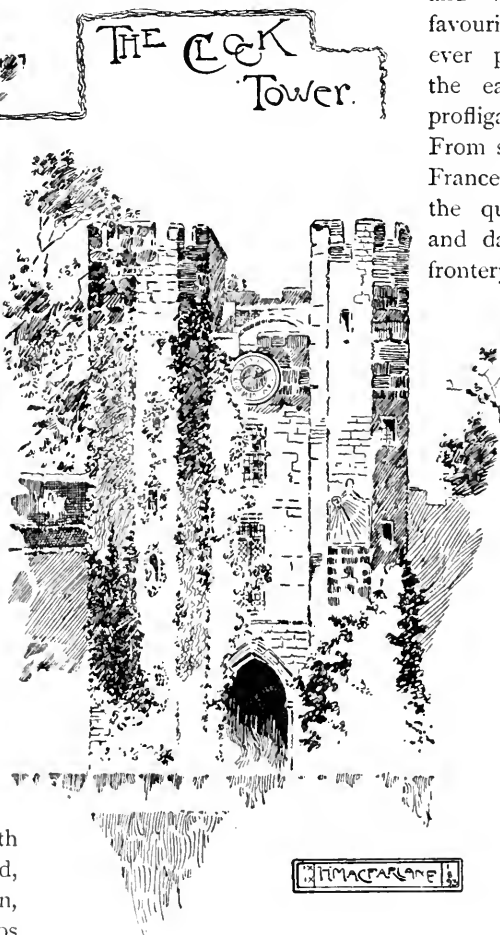
with the fortuity of romance, arrives a humble palmer, who discloses himself to his sovereign as the renowned Earl of Warwick, returned from the Holy Land and oppressed with the weight of his own shortcomings. He is persuaded to meet the terrible foe, who appears on the field "so weightily harnessed that his horse could scarce carry him, and before him a cart loaded with Danish axes, great clubs with knobs of iron, square bars of steel, lances, and iron hooks to pull his adversary to him." At the sight of such preparations for his slaughter, even Guy's valour failed, and, we are told, "never he was'n so sore afeard sith then he was born." Yet, though unhorsed, bereft of sword, and with skull cleft in twain, he fights valiantly, and, seizing an axe, lops off one of the giant's arms. They "held out the combat till the evening of that day," when Colbrand sinks from loss of blood, and is promptly beheaded. Guy then, shunning the honours that

are justly his, retires to a cell at the Cliffe which bears his name, and there passes his days in the solitude of a recluse.

Leaving the age of fable, we pass through the line of the Norman Newburghs, who for six generations were lords of Warwick, and come to the rule of another Guy, the "Black Dogge," when a memorable incident arrests attention. On Blacklow Hill, two miles from the Castle, an ancient inscription runs thus—

"1311  
P. Gaveston,  
Earl of Cornwall,  
beheaded here."

It records the fitting end of the most notorious and worthless favourite that ever poisoned the ear of a profligate king. From southern France, he had the quick wit and daring effrontery of his



race. By his personal beauty and winning tongue he made himself for a time supreme, causing the dismissal of the great lords with careless jest and

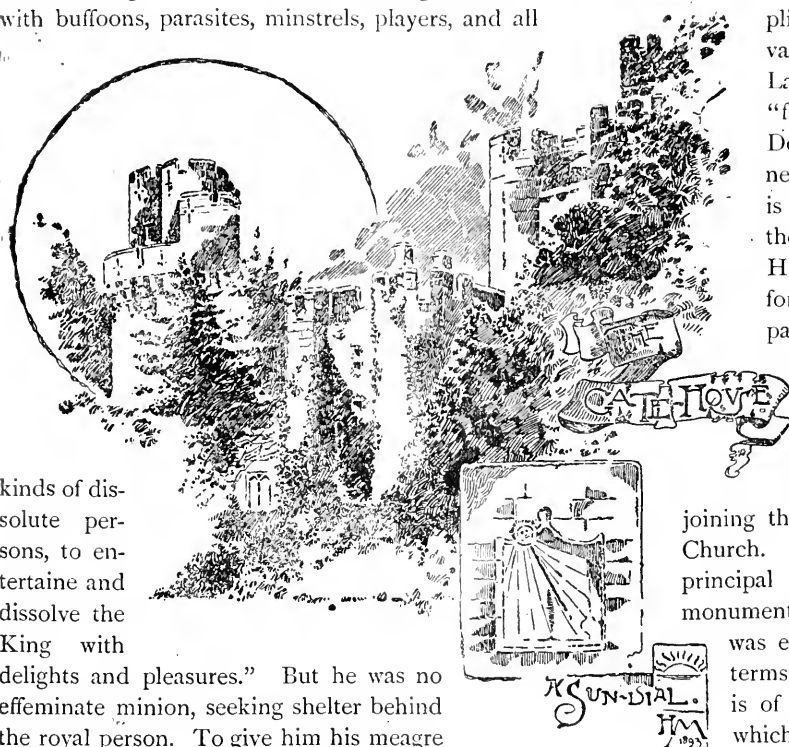
withering taunt. He brought with him the luxuriance and extravagance of the East, "filling the Court with buffoons, parasites, minstrels, players, and all

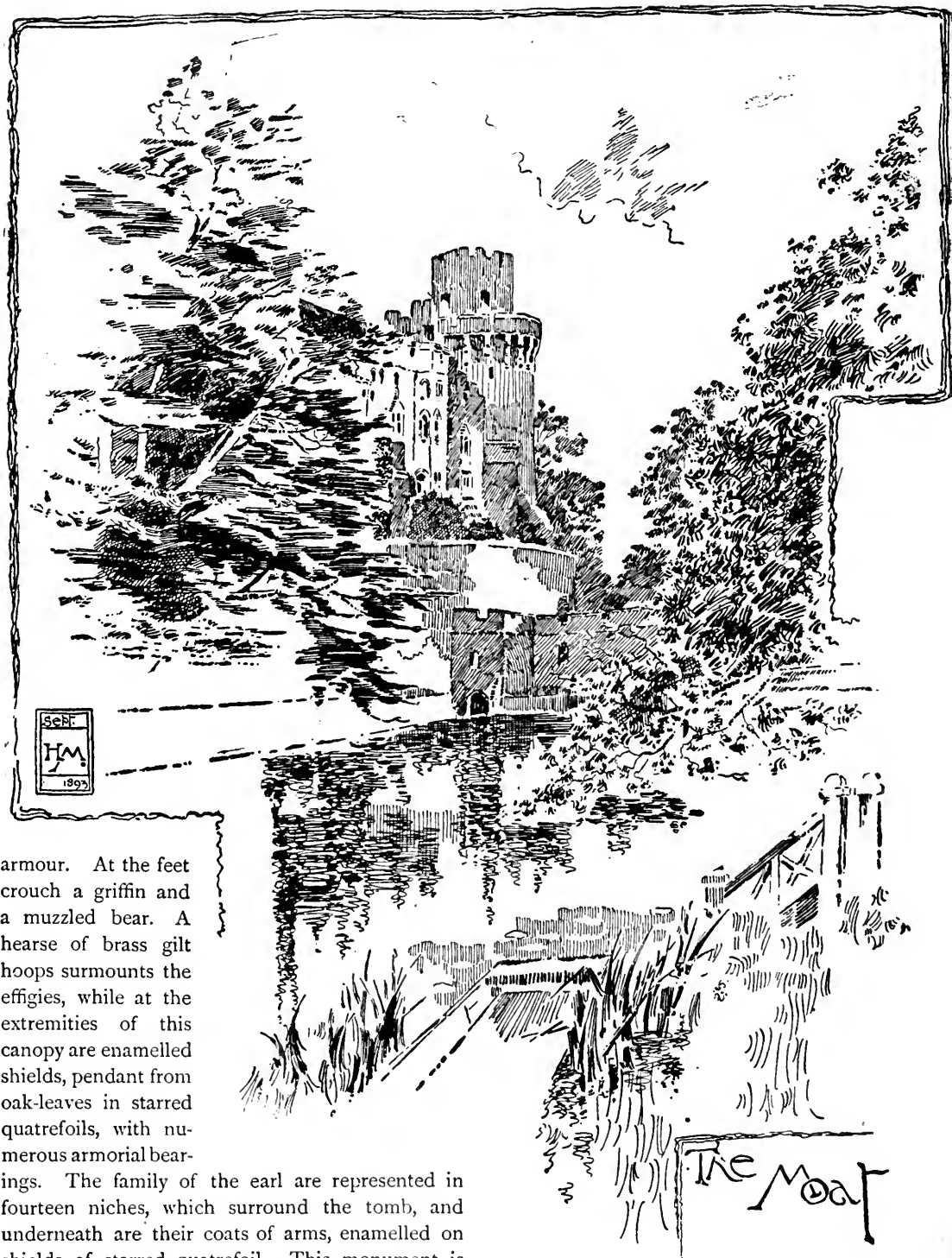
steel casques, not harder than their grim faces. In vain to fall prostrate and supplicate those stony hearts; in vain to clasp the feet of stern Lancaster and plead for pity "from his gentle lord;" the Black Dog's teeth are fastening on his neck, and the bitterness of death is upon him. Out again into the night, this time to Blacklow Hill, where on the ridge that forms a hurried block, this tragic page of history ends.

Warwick abounds in memorials of the lordly family of Beauchamp, the noblest of which is, undoubtedly, the chapel adjoining the south chancel of St. Mary's Church. Almost in the centre of the principal apartment stands the superb monument of its founder, for whom it was expressly built according to the terms of his will. The altar tomb is of gray marble, on the slab of which the life-size figure of Richard de Beauchamp, in brass gilt, reclines. The head is uncovered, and rests on a

kinds of dissolute persons, to entertain and dissolve the King with delights and pleasures." But he was no effeminate minion, seeking shelter behind the royal person. To give him his meagre due, he was brave and skilled in arms; the pick of English chivalry fell in tourney before him. Yet, smarting under his lance, the keen edge of his tongue made them smart still more. His nick-names struck home and festered; but it was dangerous sport to kick against the stolid wall of the Baronage. Amongst his bitterest foes were the Earls of Lancaster, Pembroke, and Warwick, whom he had respectively dubbed "The Actor," "The Jew," and "The Black Dog." The last had sworn an oath that the favourite should feel his fangs, and ruthlessly he kept his vow. Temporarily abandoned by his shifty sovereign, Gaveston throws himself into Scarborough Castle, but surrenders to the Earls of Pembroke and Warwick on receiving a guarantee of his personal safety. Not till then does he see the trap into which he has fallen. Roused from his sleep, he is hurried through the night, he knows not where, until he sees the great gate of Warwick loom above him, and hears the triumphal shout of the hostile mass and the din of martial music. There on a daïs within, sit, in awful silence, a row of the chief barons to judge him, the glare of the torchlight glinting on their

helmet and crest; the body is clad in plated





armour. At the feet crouch a griffin and a muzzled bear. A hearse of brass gilt hoops surmounts the effigies, while at the extremities of this canopy are enamelled shields, pendant from oak-leaves in starred quatrefoils, with numerous armorial bearings. The family of the earl are represented in fourteen niches, which surround the tomb, and underneath are their coats of arms, enamelled on shields of starred quatrefoil. This monument is unsurpassed by any in England, with the exception, perhaps, of Henry VII.'s in Westminster Abbey. It immortalises one of the most striking characters of the fifteenth century.

When Owen Glendower swooped from his mountain fastnesses and raised the fire of revolt through the length and breadth of Wales, it was Richard of Warwick who snatched the standard



from the hardy Celts with his own hand. When Hotspur leagued with the Scots and threatened the North, he gained still greater fame at Shrewsbury, where the rebel leader fell. We see him in the French wars, winning fresh laurels, and finally Lieutenant-General of France, during the minority of Henry VI., in which capacity he died at Rouen. His body was deposited in a stone coffin and conveyed to its resting-place at Warwick with funereal pomp. Some three centuries later, the floor of the chapel fell in, and the coffin was broken open. The body was found fresh and intact, but rapidly decayed on being subjected to the air. The ladies of Warwick had rings and other ornaments made from the hair of Earl Richard.

The heiress of the Beauchamps became the wife of Richard Neville, who assumed the title of Earl of Warwick. He is by far the greatest figure in the long line of illustrious owners. In the zenith of his power, he was the veritable ruler of England, and made and unmade crowns at his pleasure. "He could raise armies at his call from his own earldoms. Six hundred levied retainers followed him to Parliament." He is called the last of the Barons with some truth, yet there was in him little of the brutal force of the old order that stood between the throne and the people. He had more of the Italian genius for intrigue and surprise. Though daring enough in war and swift in action, he excelled most in subtle scheming and in swift acts of treachery at critical moments. If we rely on contemporary critics, he had none of the reckless candour with which Shakespear endows him, nor does he deserve the epithets that are put into the mouth of Suffolk: "Blunt-witted lord, ignoble in demeanour!" At one time, his diplomacy had raised up such connections that he seemed beyond the tricks of fortune. His two daughters were married to the King's brothers, and his nephew and heir was betrothed to Edward's only child. Yet a few years sufficed to see him placing the feeble Henry once more on the throne, and in a short space more, ruined and dead upon the field of Barnet. Lytton, though his novel is written in a spirit of the most abject hero-worship, gives, in the following description, a fairly authentic portrait of the great King-maker—"The Earl was in the lusty vigour of his age: his hair, of deepest black, was worn short, as in disdain of the effeminate fashions of the day, and fretted bare from

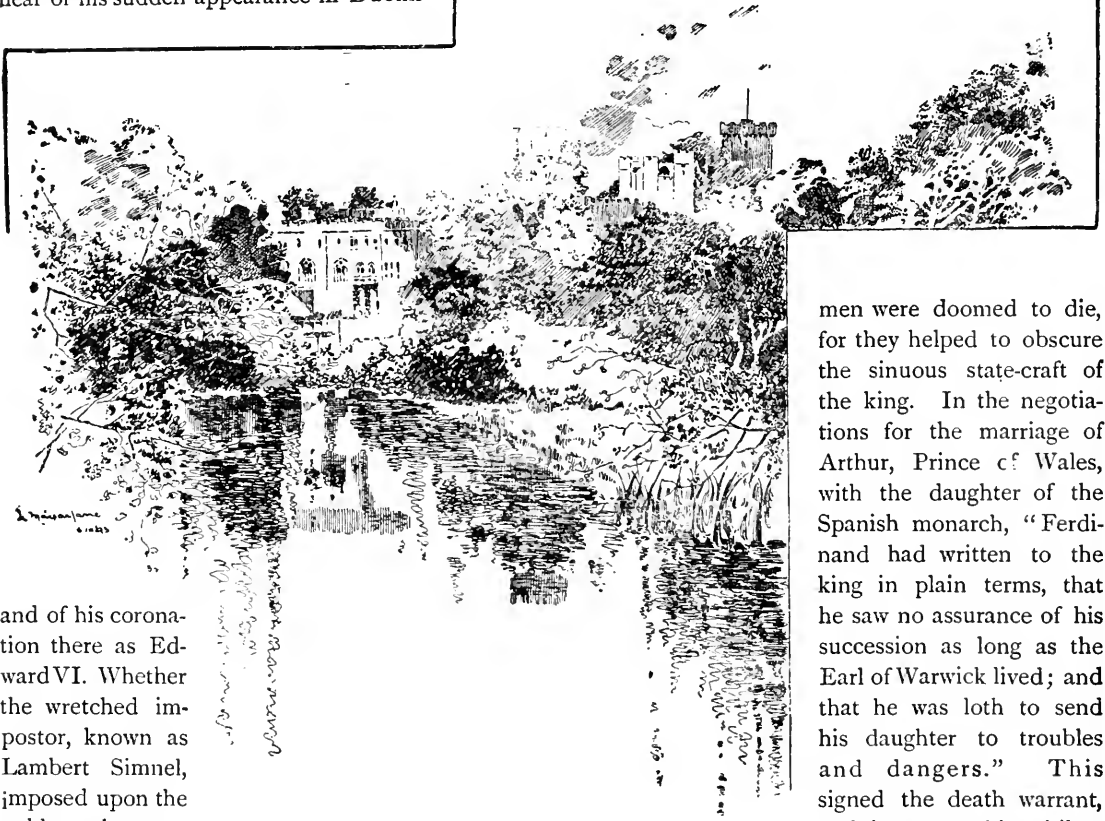
the temples by the constant and early friction of his helmet, gave to a forehead naturally lofty a yet more majestic appearance of expanse and height; his complexion, though dark and sun-burnt, glowed with rich health; the beard was closely shaven and left, in all its remarkable beauty, the contour of the oval face and iron jaw, strong as if clasped in iron; the features were marked and aquiline, as was common to those of Norman blood; the form spare, but of prodigious width and depth of chest, the more apparent from the fashion of the short surcoat, which was thrown back, and left in broad expanse a placard, not of holiday velvets and satins, but of steel, polished as a mirror, and inlaid with gold . . . His great stature, from the length of his limbs, was not so observable when he sat . . . like some paladin of the rhyme of poet or romancer; and perhaps not only in this masculine advantage but in the rare and harmonious combination of colossal strength, with lithe and graceful lightness, a more splendid union of all the outward qualities we are inclined to give to the heroes of old, never dazzled the eye or impressed the fancy."

By contrast with this stupendous personality, the sensual Clarence seems as a carrion crow in the place of a cloud-soaring eagle. By right of his marriage with Isabel Neville, he succeeded to the title and domains of Warwick, and made the Castle his chief residence, adding greatly to its strength and beauty. His ambitious wife did not long survive the father she had helped to betray: five years from his fall, she meets her death, with some suspicion of violence, for a female servant is executed on a charge of having poisoned her. Her end indirectly involves the fate of her husband, for, by his unseemly haste to contract another union with the House of Burgundy, he incurs the suspicion of his brother, the king, and is incarcerated in the Tower, where the dark story of his murder has taken such strange shapes.

The career of their son, the young Earl of Warwick, forms a melancholy but interesting page of history. Doomed, by his nearness to the throne, to be a mark for the contending parties that were playing at see-saw in the Scales of Destiny, he passed his brief life in the rôle of a prisoner, making his exit by the block. During the reign of his uncle Richard, he lived at Sheriff Hutton Castle, in a kind of honourable captivity,

whence he was removed, after the fall of the House of York at Bosworth, to the safer keeping of the Tower. It must have tickled his gaolers hugely to hear of his sudden appearance in Dublin

## WARWICK CASTLE from the BRIDGE



and of his coronation there as Edward VI. Whether the wretched impostor, known as Lambert Simnel, imposed upon the nobles who supported him, or whether they seized upon the ludicrous situation to make an anti-Lancastrian demonstration, is open to conjecture; but he actually appeared at Stoke-upon-Trent with eight thousand followers behind him. These were hacked to pieces in the thorough fashion of the times, and Simnel, not deemed worthy of a trial, fell from the position of royal claimant and "turned a broach that had worn a crown," while the true Warwick was paraded before the people in a procession from the Tower to St. Paul's.

For fourteen years did the young earl chafe within the gloomy walls of the Tower before death gave him freedom. In the last year of his captivity he was associated with a more remarkable claimant, Perkin Warbeck, whose claim to be the younger of the butchered princes is even to this day a subject of controversy. The two young

men were doomed to die, for they helped to obscure the sinuous state-craft of the king. In the negotiations for the marriage of Arthur, Prince of Wales, with the daughter of the Spanish monarch, "Ferdinand had written to the king in plain terms, that he saw no assurance of his succession as long as the Earl of Warwick lived; and that he was loth to send his daughter to troubles and dangers." This signed the death warrant, and it was to his pitiless murder that Catherine referred when in the hour of her abandonment

she called her ruin the judgment of God, "for that her former marriage was made in blood." A groundless charge of treason and a tribunal of obsequious peers were enough to convict them. It was alleged that they had conspired with the keepers to seize the Tower and the royal treasure, blow up the powder magazine, and escape in the confusion; that it was intended to make "Peter Warbeck of Tournay" king; and that the Earl had discussed treason with him through a hole in the floor of his cell. Perkin was hanged at Tyburn and Warwick was dignified, as became his rank, with an execution within the Tower. As an old chronicler puts it, "One fierce and strong wave devoured and swallowed both their lives."

The house of Dudley, which now comes to the

front, lacks nothing in interest as compared with the former lines. The first earl, better known as the Duke of Northumberland, resembled somewhat the great Neville in his ruthless struggle for supremacy, but he lacked the Titan grandeur of the King-maker. He had only a sickly boy to work upon, and when all his schemes were consummated,

Richard de Beauchamp, is another splendid monument to this Court profligate, and under the arch are detailed the honours showered upon her "Sweet Robin" by the amorous Queen Bess; and an eulogium is passed upon his many virtues as though in mockery of his want of them. It was at this period that the queen, during one of her "pro-



failed miserably in the first hour of revolt, throwing up his cap and cheering for the implacable Mary. But peace be to his ashes! The piteous story of the gentle Jane Grey is enough to blacken him for ever, had he the perfections of an archangel. The gay Earl of Leicester, of Kenilworth ill-fame, belongs to this stock. On the north side of the chapel where lies

gresses," stayed at the Castle. On her arrival, "the bailief, rising out of the place where he knelid, approchid nere to the coche or chariott wherein her

Maiestie satt, and coming to the side thereof, kneeling downe, offered unto her Maiestie a purse very faire wrought, and in the purse twenty pounds, all in sovereignes, which her Maiestie, putting forth

her hand, receivid, showing withall a very benign and gracious countenance. And therewithall offered her hand to the bailief to kisse, who kissed it, and then she deliverid to him agayne his mase, which she kept on her lappe all the tyme of the oracyon. And after the mase deliverid, she called Mr. Aglionby to her, and offered her hand to him to kisse, withall smyling said, 'Come hither, little recorder; it was told me that youe wold be afraid to look upon me or to speake boldly, but youe were not so afraid of me as I was of youe.'

The turmoil and bloodshed of the middle ages seemed to give way with the advent of the Grevilles to the influence of the great renaissance that spread over Europe during the sixteenth century. In the polished Sir Fulke Greville, who was created Lord Brooke, with possession of the castle, we have a worthy compeer of Sir Philip Sidney and the group of student-knights of Elizabeth's court. He found the buildings in a most ruinous condition, the strongest part being used as a county gaol, and spent some twenty thousand pounds—an enormous amount for those times—in its restoration. He deserved a better fate than to fall by the hand of an aggrieved servant. The particulars of the murder are as follows:—"A creature, pampered to insolence by the plenty of his lord's table, felt offence at not being named in his will (to which instrument he was called in as one of the witnesses to his lordship's signature), and stabbed him either with a

knife or a sword in an apartment of Brook House, Holborn. Immediately after committing the horrid deed, he put an end to his own existence." His tomb may be seen in the octagonal room at the north of the choir. During the later centuries in which his descendants have ruled at Warwick, they have taken their full share of history-making. For instance, in the wars of King and Commonwealth, the castle, under the direction of Robert, Lord Brooke, was converted, in 1642, into a garrison for the Parliament. The artillery which was despatched from London to defend it was intercepted by Lord Northampton, who had raised the siege in the interest of the Royalists. Despite this disadvantage, Sir Edward Peto held out with one piece of ordnance until Lord Brooke arrived to his aid. Although victorious at the battle of Edgehill, this nobleman's career was cut short by a musket ball in the successful assault upon Lichfield. Again in 1695, we see another Lord Brooke welcoming his sovereign, William of Orange, to the castle with great pomp. Guy's Tower is resplendent in illumination, and a cistern containing a hundred and twenty gallons of punch is consumed in drinking prosperity to the royal guest. "A mighty pile of faggots blazed in the middle of the spacious court which is overhung by ruins green with the ivy of centuries." The present Earl is a worthy representative of these noble Brookes who, in 1749, obtained the fuller title of Earls of Warwick.

## A PUSHING WOMAN.

BY E. CONDER GRAY.

MRS. Pounceonham, whom I knew well in earlier days, was a woman of strong character, and no little push. She had married, as I understood, for family reasons, a meek demure little man, who, by natural law, seemed ever to "look up" to her. She was dark, tall, and full-formed, while he was very slight and short, and fair, and had an odd habit of passing his hand through his thin hair, as though to raise it, if even thus he might seem to add a hair's-breadth to his height; and in his very walk he appeared to rise on tiptoe at each step, as though to stretch himself out. When the pair walked out together it was as though there were great efforts at mutual accom-

modation: he stretched up, while she bent a little towards him, or bent down; to take his arm was something of an effort for her; and her frankness to her friends respecting what it had cost her to keep him up to the mark in her idea was one of her most amusing characteristics.

"You know, my dear," she would say to her friend, Miss Jane Cheswick, "I have never known what it is to have a master, and though they say that's what a woman needs and finds her joy in, not I. You can see for yourself that my Alfred isn't the kind of man to assert himself or be master. What we should have done, in spite of his little money, I don't know, [if I hadn't had

something in me different from him. We should have dropped out of every kind of society—lost every friend worth having—and gone down to the level of shopkeepers and tradesfolk. Yes, indeed, and he wouldn't have minded a bit, for if I leave him for a day or two anywhere to go on a visit, as I sometimes need to do, I always find he has made some unfortunate acquaintance, which I have to puzzle myself how to break off without too much hurting his feelings. Strange, isn't it? I sometimes am very strongly tempted to believe in that heredity they talk so much of now-a-days, for, between you and me, his grandfather was in the cheese and bacon and butter trade, and made a pile of half-a-million, which was divided among his numerous grand-children, most of whom, I'm afraid, would never have made a penny; and were it not that I am sure my Alfred at all events would never have made a penny, I should believe, my dear, in the doctrine of heredity out and out. But when you think of it, you see, it comes to cut both ways, my dear; it cuts both ways. The most amazing instance of what I have told you is that when I went, as you know, to visit my friends the Goulds last year—not the Baring-Goulds, my dear—the Somersetshire Goulds, of Frome, you know, I found, when I returned, that Alfred had become quite friendly with Jones, our milkman, who had actually been here and drunk tea with him in my absence, to the laughter of the servants, who went smiling and sniffing for some time after, with their heads turned whenever Jones or even milk was named. When I remonstrated with him, he said to me, 'Well, my dear, Jones is not a common milkman—not at all, my dear; a graduate of St. Neots, lost health, went to Australia, made a little money, came back, was told he'd lose health again if he didn't find some out-door work; and so he made up his mind to go into the milk trade, bought this "round," as they call it, and is doing well—an uncommon well-read man, and well up in mathematics, too' (mathematics is Alfred's craze, my dear—he's always wanting to make angles equal, and that kind of thing; and sometimes, when we've had little tiffs, has told me that things that are equal to one thing are equal to one another, and such nonsense), and that he found conversation with Jones most improving, and went on to prose about some great man, Blackmore, who, he says, is proud to describe himself as a

market gardener, as if that had anything to do with him and Jones. Faugh! I really have no patience with such nonsense. Only fancy that, my dear, while all the time Mrs. Selwyn-Barrington—the Yorkshire Selwyn-Barringtons, my dear—was very anxious to have him for a day or two at Berkeley Place, for my sake, my dear, for my sake, and he never went near them, and wrote his apologies for not going on a postcard, my dear, on a postcard—only think of it; and I had to make an express journey to Berkeley Place to put Mrs. Selwyn-Barrington right—the more that Augusta had hardly done so much to please as she might when she was at their country place in the spring, though Mrs. Selwyn-Barrington could have done ever so much for her, and introduced her everywhere when she came out."

It needs to be explained that Augusta—poor Augusta—was the daughter—the only child—of Mrs. Pounceonham, and took entirely after her father, of whom she was a smaller feminine edition. She was a good girl, with a real craving for true companionship, and with a genuine touch of sentiment and poetry, a downright honest, genuine, unaffected girl. To her father's insignificance in appearance, she added a wistful weakly expression—a tendency to look at those she spoke to with a kind of side-long glance, which greatly irritated and vexed her mother. It was very hard on the girl, too, that she should have borne so imposing a name as Augusta, not to speak of Pounceonham, for she belied them both, if ever girl did—a shrinking, shy creature, like a sensitive plant, startled and nervous at the least thing, and unequal even to effective conversation, speaking mostly in a kind of whisper. Her mother's great ambition was to "bring Augusta out"—to that she was willing to devote time and money, regarding it as a duty she owed to her ancestors as well as to Augusta; but here again there was heredity which cut both ways, much to Mrs. Pounceonham's sorrow and dismay. Poor Augusta—to "finish her off"—though the finishing off was likely to have a double result, had been sent to a fashionable school on the Bois de Boulogne, as French, a good Paris accent, was indispensable, according to her mother.

"Really, my dear," she would say to her bosom friend, Miss Jane Cheswick, when this subject turned up, "I do not know what I shall do with

Augusta. She certainly does not take after my side of the house. Only fancy, before she went away she told me she should very much like to become a nurse, to go about with that regimental dress, and she such an insignificant little thing (for tall women like me and you carry it off well and do not look at all bad in it), and that long, ugly veil—half her height—flowing behind her. I said the thing was not to be thought of, that I did not believe that another girl in all London, who had such good chances as she had, and so many friends in society, would ever think of such a thing. 'But I do not care for society, mother, and I am sure I shall never do any good in it.' 'Yes, you will,' I replied, 'for you have your mother to look after you and help you, and back you up: and if you do not know what's best for you, I do, and I shall do my duty by you as a mother all the same, whatever you may feel, or think, or wish.' And then she said, with that very innocent side-look of hers, which I have tried in every way to break her out of, 'Well, then, if I can't be a nurse, I should like to study art. I am sure I could come to draw well with practice and good teaching.' She always made me angry then, I confess, though I think getting angry is the most foolish thing; it spoils your complexion for a whole day, and, do you know, I believe it is yielding to anger and spoiling the complexion that leads lots of women to powder and paint—a thing I shall never do, no, dear, never; for it is not long till it spoils you altogether. Do you remember that Maude Grimston we met at Scarborough five years ago? There was always something peaky and tearful about her, if you remember, with her tow-like hair and melting kind of blue eyes, and her bloodless skin. Well, what do you think? I met her the other day at Aunt Crofton's garden party, and of all the sights you ever saw she was one—all pasted and powdered over, and, when the sun was full upon her, she was ghastly, simply ghastly, my dear; no other word could describe it. She joined a lawn tennis set, and she plays well and sings well I must admit, but the heat and the exercise made her face moist, and the powder ran together here and there; you would have been sorry for her if you had seen her as I did: for she affects that youthful girl's hair, and the whole thing was so absurd.

"But I was speaking of Augusta, poor girl,

wasn't I? Yes; well, well, my dear, Augusta is to be a disappointment, I much fear; fancy her trudging about with one of those large portfolios under her arm through all the streets of London, and going to exhibitions and dirtying her hands with crayons, stumps, and paint. And when I held up my hands and protested, she reminded me of some Rosa Bonheur—some French creature—half woman, half man, I fancy, and of Miss Thompson, Lady Butler, who had made art help her into society, and to a fine marriage, and to everything nice; and I couldn't help saying to her, 'Well, Augusta, I'm afraid art won't help you there, but to something very different, if you choose to turn your back upon all your chances in that way, and bring your mother's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.' At this she broke down and threw herself into my arms, crying and sobbing; and that sort of scene I do hate anywhere, and especially hate the idea of my own girl yielding herself to such feelings and behaviour. And what is worst of all is that her father, if he speaks at all, backs her up in it, but now I keep him out of the way if there is any chance of such talk. Oh, my dear, I do have great fears for poor Augusta. How a woman like me could have had such a child would be inexplicable, but then she is like her father in many things—heredity again, you see, I only hope things may turn out better than I expect."

And sometimes Mrs. Pounceonham, when she was in a more tender mood, would mix up the past and the present in this way:—

"Yes, my dear, I often wonder what my great aunt, Lady Saccharine, and my first cousin, General Donnothorpe (the Donnothorpes were all military, my dear, and held high positions—Sir Alexander, you know, was Governor of Gibraltar), and I do believe, woman though I am, there is a bit—just a little bit, don't you know—of the military spirit in me. I often wonder, I say, what they would have thought had they lived to see me in such a pickle with Alfred, and poor Augusta, too. They would have felt, if they would not have said, that I had paid very fully for the little money that came in so handy just at the time, when my poor mother lost the little she had left by being too trustful of others, at Bath, when it was, more than it is now, fashionable, and foreign counts as plenteous as blackberries in it, and dreadful men like Landor

Savage moving about ; and that was the thing that led me to accept Alfred and give up my dream of being one of the women of the regiment, don't you know. Ah, well, we must make the best of it, my dear, and trust to providence."

Now, another characteristic peculiarity of Mrs. Pounceonham was her way of discussing the conduct and the characters of her husband and daughter with her visitors in their presence. Doubtless she thought that by this means she might bring more effective pressure to bear on them to stir them up, to "put some of her own spirit into them," as she said to herself. For example, one day, when Miss Jane Cheswick and a friend of hers were there, Mrs. Pounceonham led the conversation to the subject of careers for women. The chorus of disapproval that arose when one lady of birth was referred to who had gone into the West End dressmaking and millinery business was very decided. "What good will she do in that? She may make a living; she may even make some money; but she will forfeit all that she has been brought up to; and I should say would find herself, in the end, if she has the spirit of a lady in her, in the most unhappy circumstances. You can't touch pitch without some of it sticking. Of course some people are born without any notion of rank, or of birth, or of what is due to relations, or of keeping their place in the world, and nobody need hope of them that they will rise instead of fall down to their natural level, but I'm sure I should never have done anything of the kind—I should have starved rather."

Miss Cheswick nodded, and her friend, with a bend of the head, said she was exactly of Mrs. Pounceonham's mind in that matter.

Mr. Pounceonham, who dabbled in political economy and currency, as well as in mathematics, meekly remarked that now-a-days no disrespect attached to any effort honourably put forth to be "productive."

On this, Mrs. Pounceonham, eyeing the little man, as he rose and walked towards the window, with considerable severity, said, "Productive, do you say, Mr. Pounceonham; I could wish that some folks I know could be 'productive' of something like satisfaction to those nearest and dearest to them."

"Well, my dear," said Mr. Pounceonham, turning round with the most conciliatory expres-

sion, "I did not mean anything personal—present company always excepted."

"You never do mean anything personal, and I must say your exceptions of present company are not so complimentary as you meant them to be!" retorted his spouse, "that's what I do most regret in you."

"Well, my dear," said Mr. Pounceonham, with a pathetic kind of appeal, and drawing his hand through his thin hair, "I withdraw my words, and shall not say it, if it displeases you."

And Mrs. Pounceonham didn't, during what remained of the interview, address another word to her spouse, who sat apart at the window in the shadow of the curtain all the time, painfully reflecting on "production," while the three ladies discussed the company and the dresses at the garden party the day before at husky old Lady Trumpetré's, as they called her, with many a nod and knowing smile to each other.

When Miss Cheswick and her friend had gone, Mrs. Pounceonham said to her spouse:

"Alfred, dear, I should be obliged if you would not introduce your political ideas when friends of mine are here; you mustn't introduce such things as 'production,' and 'supply and demand,' and all that: it is bad form—indeed it is, to say the least of it. Such subjects are not tolerated in society. Nice civil small talk goes farther and pays best. For instance, you might have complimented Miss Cheswick on her delightful new costume, and remarked how well it suited her, and how well I would look in the same soft material, made up in the same style—not that I would copy *her*, not I, nor her friend's natty little hats either; but she was dying to have it noticed, and you, you are blind as a mole, with your 'production,' and 'supply and demand,' and 'equal angles,' and all the rest of it."

And all that poor Mr. Pounceonham could do was to say that he would try—he would try; but still he could not help painfully reflecting on "production," and on the reason why it should be so tabooed in society, as his wife had said it was; and I would not be a veritable recorder if I did not add that Mr. Pounceonham, when he retired to the little place that stood for his library and smoking room, did say something very disrespectful of society, and resolve that he should not come any more into contact with it.





## VOICE OF THE RIVER.

A MADRIGAL.

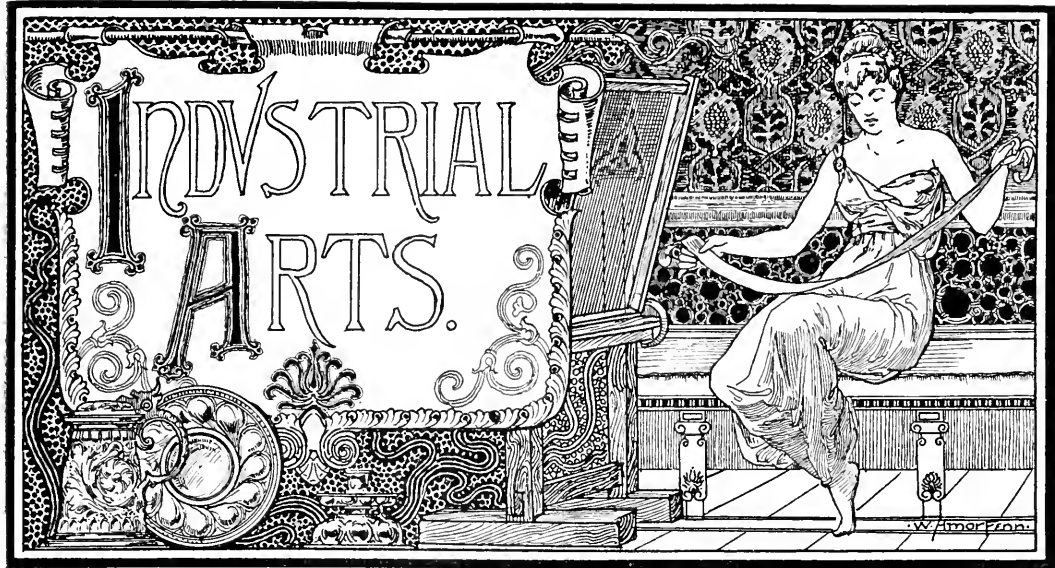
Flow for ever, gentle river,  
To the throat of singing thrushes  
Join the ripple of your note :  
Lovers sway like summer rushes :  
Maidens, as the red briar flushes  
When Etesian gales are blown,  
Bend and blush, and so are gone ;  
Stay, O stay ! nay, gentle river :  
Thou and they must wander on.

On your bosom, lustrous river,  
Lilies float ; from distant reaches  
Comes the cuckoo's double note ;  
Ah, the music that beseeches !  
When, beneath the long-aisled beeches,  
Lovers sauntering side by side  
Hear sweet bells at eventide :  
Stay ! then stay thy flowing, river :  
Nay, thou know'st the world is wide.

Murmuring river, roll for ever  
Where melodious drooping willows,  
Sylvan light and shadow throwing,  
Lean, and listen as you flow :  
But, at last, beyond these willows,  
River ! restless salt sea-billows  
Steal the magic from your gleam,  
Seal the music of your stream ;  
So, too soon will aching pillows  
Sob to sleep love's darken'd dream.

GASCOIGNE MACKIE.





# I.

## THE PRINTING OF COTTONS, SILKS, AND VELVETS.

BY KINETON PARKES.

IN the series of articles on the Industrial Arts, of which this is the initial number, I propose to deal with the production of those various articles and materials by which it is now possible to render our surroundings pleasant and to a certain extent artistic, as it is expressed. Twenty years ago the series would have been impossible, for the reason that the subjects with which they deal were either non-existent or were in so rudimentary a condition as to be of very little general interest. Thanks, however, to the efforts of such men as Mr. William Morris, and to such movements

as the much misunderstood Aesthetic movement, what was then impossible has been rendered easy, and now there is no excuse for a really

ugly home, or for the prevalence of unsightly objects therein. The result of the ferment in these matters is that manufacturers have, at last, recognised the necessity of producing wares which are more or less of an artistic nature; and the hideous damasks and worse wall-papers of a few years ago are almost obsolete. There is an imperative demand for design in manufactures intended for domestic use and for the purposes of decoration; and now the



FIG. 1.



FIG. 2.

manufacturer calls in the aid of artists like Mr. Walter Crane to design for him ; and the products of such co-operation, when they come into the market, are eagerly sought for, and the system is proved a success.

Perhaps no more interesting development in the appreciation of what is beautiful could be instanced than that which has taken place with regard to colour. The old crude tints are rapidly being superseded by chaster shades : and this leads us to the consideration of the immediate subject of this article, which deals with fabrics which owe their beauty to colour and design, obtained by the process of printing.

Textiles, or woven fabrics, whether of cotton, wool, or silk, which are patterned, or which have some sort of design wrought upon them, may be divided into two groups : those in which the design and colour is part of the texture of the fabric, like a brocaded silk, and with which we shall deal in a future article ; and those which are originally woven plain, and upon which the design in one or more colours is stamped or imprinted, like a printed cretonne curtain. In the first place the

design may be seen on both sides of the fabric, although, of course, there is a *right* side to it still ; in the second, the design appears only on one surface.

This process of printing upon woven material has a very wide application, and is of remote antiquity, although its application to artistic fabrics for hangings and furniture is comparatively recent. In India, cotton printing reached, many years ago, a very advanced stage, and there are now in this country many hundreds of wood blocks brought from India, of all sizes and designs, some of which are in actual use to-day. In the Indian temples and elsewhere, great pieces of cotton cloth are covered, by this printing process, with the ancient mythology of the country, and used for hangings, or for floor-cloths. And now we are developing this industry here, clearing away its crudities, and toning down its glaring faults, but substantially proceeding on the same lines as those laid down hundreds of years ago. This process, of which I am now speaking, is accomplished exclusively by hand. I shall not deal at all with the process of



FIG. 3.

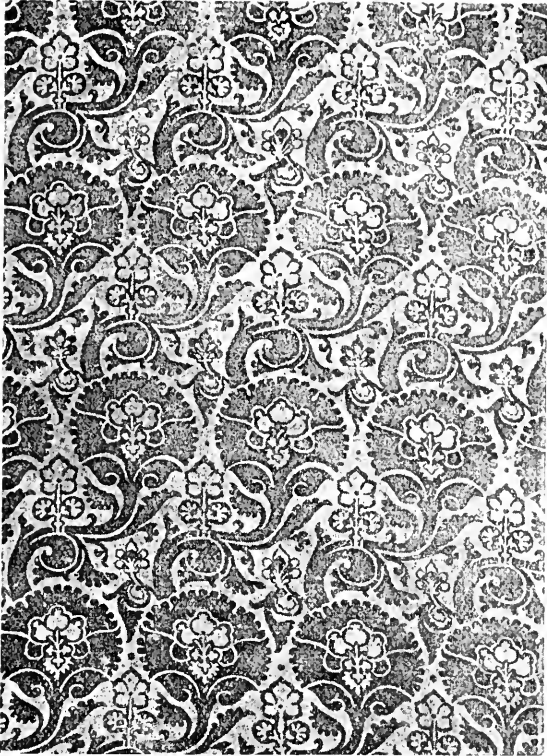


FIG. 4.

machine printing, by which so much of the cheap muslin and cotton "prints" are produced, which is quite a distinct thing.

The charm and value of these printed fabrics depend upon their colouring and design, and a certain touch of individuality which is imparted to them by the process of hand-printing, by which they are produced. They are not dyed in the ordinary sense of the word: that is, they are not immersed in a vat of dye, as are pieces which are of an uniform colour, but the colour is applied, section by section, from the wood block by the printer. The process is not an easy one, for the blocks are made of hard and heavy wood, and some of them are as much as a foot square.

The initial process of all in the production of printed stuff is, of course, the manufacture of the material which is to be printed in colour. This may vary very extensively: cotton, wool, linen, silk, silk-plush, and velvet are some of the materials employed. The next step is the mixing of the colours, and this is of the utmost importance, for, as we have seen, upon the colour half of the value of the finished product depends. The

design, when made by the artist, is passed on to the block cutter, who makes a block for each colour in the design, and, if the design is very large, two or more blocks may probably be required, as it is impossible to get an even impact with a very large one. The blocks being made, and the colour mixed and placed in a vat or container, which runs on wheels and rails like a small tramway, the material to be printed is stretched tightly and evenly on a very smooth and level table, the width of the fabric, and several yards in length. The printer then takes the block in his left hand, covers the carved under surface with colour from the container, and, turning, applies it to the material. He then directs a few sharp blows with a heavy mallet, the head of which is of lead, and then lifts it, and we have the first impression of the pattern. He treats the whole length of stuff in this manner, printing the "repeats" of the design. Then the second block, with a fresh colour, is applied so carefully that none of its lines overlap those of the first, and none of the colour runs into that of the first, and so on until he has gone over the whole

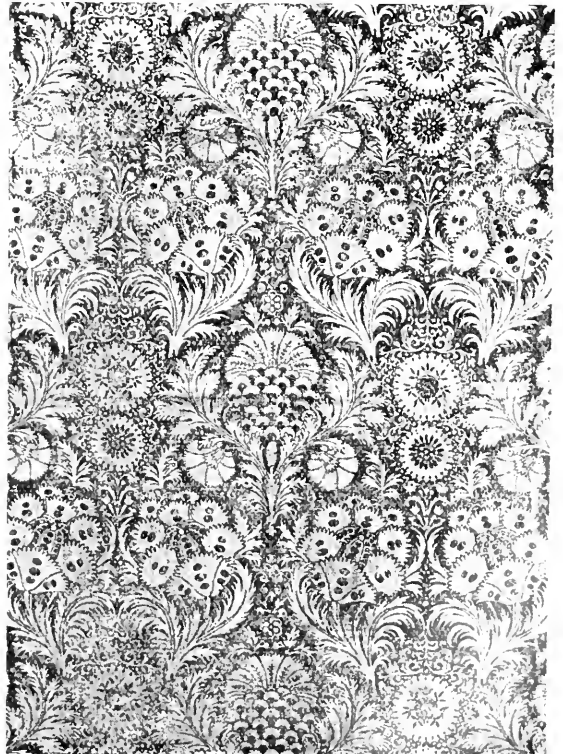


FIG. 5.

piece as before. If the cloth is in two colours it will now be printed, if in three, a third block is taken, and the cloth treated as before. This is mainly what the printing of fabrics consists of, but there are various mechanical processes which the pieces of material have to undergo before they are finished. Previous to the actual printing, the material must be scoured and prepared, so as to remove from its surface all little irregularities like knots or stray ends of cotton or silk, so that the colour may attach itself regularly and evenly. When the printing has been accomplished, the piece undergoes the process of "steaming," by which the colours are fixed into the fibres of the cloth. It is then placed in a fountain of clear water, and by means of mechanical appliances, thoroughly washed, to remove the gum and other matters used with the colour in the printing process. The washing is followed by a quick drying, which is attained by means of a series of hollow drums, supplied with steam, over which the cloth passes, until all the moisture is driven out. Then the cloth is ready for finishing, which consists, in the case of a velvet, in bringing up the pile by means of rubbing, and other processes.

The whole course of the manufacture of these printed stuffs is accomplished in an ordinary and methodical way ; but it is lacking in the mechanical effect of machine work, and in this it has many advantages which recommend it to the notice of those who care for work produced under such conditions.

I am able to give these particulars concerning the production of printed cretonnes and velvets by the kindness of Mr. Thomas Wardle, of Leek, in North Staffordshire, where, for many years, beautiful fabrics have been produced under his guidance. This printing process is a development of Mr. Wardle's dyeing works, where silks and cottons and velvets are dyed in most beautiful colours. It is due to Mr. Wardle to add that he has rendered possible that of which I spoke at the commencement of this article—the replacement of the old crude colour stuffs and the old crude damasks by materials in which form and colour are blended to produce a beautiful whole.

Space does not permit of a detailed account of the many designs which have emanated from the tissue printing works at Leek ; but several examples are given to indicate the character of this delightful industry.

*Fig. 1.—Tomato Pattern, Designed by Mrs. Coombe.*

*Fig. 2.—"Churnet" Design by Miss Sheppard.*

*Fig. 3.—Design by Lewis F. Day.*

*Fig. 4.—Coloured Design of Velvet Stuff, Italian, XV. Century.*

*Fig. 5.—Design by Frederick Fischbach.*



THE  
SUFFERINGS OF THE ARTIST'S FRIEND.

ONCE gained a prize at school for making an outline drawing of a coal-scuttle, and a wooden bucket, and a frying-pan, and a pair of top-boots, all grouped in a confused manner on the top of a grand piano; that is to say, one of the top-boots was coming out of the water-bucket, and the other was making an angle of 75 degrees with the coal-scuttle, and by a triumph of ingenuity the frying-pan was just balancing itself on the edge of the piano. I founded a great reputation for being artistic upon that prize, and enjoyed it to the full until a year ago. Then, however, I met my first artist friend, and the time had come for me to learn that idols have feet of clay, and that all drawing prizes make not art.

It was in a remote village on the East Coast. There was no pier, and no pitch-pine Town Hall, and no Jubilee Clock. There were no newspapers, and no volunteers, and there was only one automatic Sweet machine. But there were plenty of artists. They absolutely crowded the place; artists of both sexes, and all ages, and various capabilities; always with the same kit, easels that looked like bundles of asparagus, camp-stools that folded up like umbrellas, paint-boxes that bore the material look of sandwich tins. They always walked at a terrific pace, they always stopped suddenly in the middle of the street or on some equally unpropitious site to unfold their apparatus, and they always apostrophised the advent of their nearest and dearest when the sunset was at its best. There was no lack of material for sketches, either on the shore or in the village; the difficulty lay in finding standing room round a popular subject. There was literally not an old boat apiece. Greengrocers' shops were equally popular, or rather more so, because they did not depend so much on the weather for effect; they could be used for still-life studies, with lime-light to taste: they were most popular in the mornings as a rule, probably because the tomatoes were not then sold out. It was no uncommon thing to walk down the High Street to order some potatoes, and to find the door

of the shop barred by the greengrocer's daughter in an attitude, and to be told by the proud greengrocer from behind that the delivery of the potatoes in time for lunch depended on the "hartist" opposite who was sketching them at that moment, and finally to be requested by the "hartist" himself to move out of his line of vision.

It was kind of fate to decree that I should receive my baptism of fire at the hands of a lady artist. There is something so frank about a lady artist, that after knowing one you could never think there was a chance of your even attaining mediocrity as a painter; she becomes almost inhuman sometimes in her determination to make her meaning perfectly clear. And my first artist friend never gave me any hope at all. We began with an acquaintanceship. It was all right so long as it remained an acquaintanceship. That only meant a polite dispute over carrying the easel, and an occasional pose for the figure in the foreground. But intimacy meant the easel, the water-bottle, the sketch-books, the camp-stool, and wraps for keeping off malaria at sunset time. It also meant that I was no longer needed for the foreground. That was the rub. She was a clever woman and she put it neatly:—"I hate painting in one solitary girl, it *looks* as if I went sketching with a friend and made her useful." I acquiesced weakly—mentally, and in the last words, with emphasis—and I clambered down sadly from my insecure position on a rickety fence. Had she told me that she feared being as well known by her girl in blue as Wouyverman by his white horse, I might not have cared so much; but she merely impressed me with my utterly inartistic position, and I could no longer say "*We* are going sketching." Henceforth I was nothing but the inartistic friend. I found I had many things to learn. Hitherto, for instance, I had imagined that when a sketch was chosen the next thing to do was to sit down and begin it. That plainly showed how inartistic I was, for it is only the guileless amateur who would do anything so consequent as this. The real artist

sets up his easel, opens his colour-box, examines the scene doubtfully for some seconds, and then catches all the things up in his arms to deposit them a few yards further on. This operation must be repeated several times if you are really artistic. If you are the artist's friend you follow behind, trailing the easel. I have walked round a picturesque cottage for half-an-hour in this way.

I learnt also that to be artistic you must never look the landscape bravely in the face, as it were; you must make telescopes of your fingers and squint through them with your head on one side. I am afraid my conversation, also, was, and always will be, as inartistic as everything else about me. The picture of a mud bank, and a stranded boat, and a dull sky rather puzzles me for an adjective, whereas, if I were an artist, I should merely observe in a tone that would patronise Nature, "Quite Dutch, eh?" and then there would be nothing else to be said. Again, when I used to remark that it was a beautiful day, generally for the purposes of conversation, she would gently put me right by mentioning that it was not "sketchable" and therefore unworthy of notice.

In these, and numberless other ways, she made me vow within me to tear that outline drawing out of its grey mount and its ebony frame directly I went home, and to thrust the memory of the top-boots, and the frying-pan, and the coal-scuttle, and the water-bucket, and the grand piano far back into my inartistic past. For my first artist friend had done her work.

When she had quite dispelled all doubt in my mind as to my true position, she then suggested that I should take a book with me. It sounds most idyllic to sit on a stile and read while your friend is making sketches at your side. But it is not at all idyllic in reality. In the first place there was very rarely a stile. We used to settle ourselves in the centre of a bog, or on the mud of a river bank when the tide had gone down, or opposite the inevitable greengrocer's shop in the village. It was all right for her, because she had the camp-stool, but I did not have a camp-stool, and I had not the face to carry such a characteristic appendage of the artist on my own account. So I learnt to sink down on the mud or the bog or the pavement with equal indifference, and when she had eased her conscience by lamely exhorting me not to take cold, she would leave me to the enjoyment of my

book. Not for long, however, for no sooner did I grow interested in my novel than most of the things, including the easel and the camp-stool and sundry jackets and shawls, were flung upon me from above, and I looked up in a dazed manner to discover that the sketch had been abandoned and my lady-friend was already nearly out of sight in pursuit of another idea.

These are only a few of the evils of the artist's companion. I soon found I was gradually descending into a kind of business agent to this same lady friend. I had to bribe little boys who were peacefully sailing their boats, to remain in the same position for half-an-hour, while their boats drifted out of sight with the tide, because she wanted a figure for effect. I had to make little girls sit on the damp grass and smile as though they liked it, while she drew them in hastily, and implored them to look natural. Sometimes, when she became completely surrounded by small children sucking liquorice and peppermint, she would rouse me un pityingly from my hasty snatches at a novel, and I had to return to my weary duties and induce the sticky crowd to move on: they generally did, but I fancied I saw derision in their wretched little impish eyes.

But the worst job I ever had was with the greengrocer's wife. This was not a popular greengrocer's shop until my friend discovered it, and then she practically "made" it, as the Queen "makes" a watering place. The great point about it was that it had a pink and white awning over the fruit and vegetables, so judge of our dismay when we found one day that the awning had not been put out. I saw what was expected of me, and offered to go over and interview the owner. It was a ridiculous request to make when there was not a particle of sunshine, and a north wind was rushing down the street, and I made it with some diffidence. But I might have known she was used to this sort of thing.

"Ah! you be the hartist what was here before," she began at once. I smiled, and did not contradict her. But her next remark floored me again.

"We had a *real* hartist here last summer, one as gets a pile o' money for his pictures. An' he painted my place beautiful, *he* did." I mildly reverted to my first request. "As for the bit of awning," she proceeded doubtfully, "there ain't no call for to put it out when plums isn't in. And



plums is out now." I was wise in my experience, and did not press the point.

"So you have been painted before?" I said, carelessly.

"Ay, by a *real* hartist, too. And he painted the old woman, my man's mother, a-sittin' in the doorway a-damin' of her stockings—she that were in her ninety-three, and died on the 'liveneth of *Jin-uary* last."

Another crime to be laid to the artist's reckoning, I thought. I was not sure whether to comment on the artist or the grandmother, but seeing a memorial card with embossed angels and weeping willows framed on the wall, I chose the old woman: and it proved a fruitful topic.

"Ah, she were a wonderful old 'un, she were. My man, he supported her, he did, for nigh upon fifteen year, and then my son, what's in the sweeping business, and has got more chimneys than what he can do with, he took her on, he did, as he oughter done, an' she died on the 'liveneth of *Jin-uary* last."

There was a silent pause, and I moved towards the door.

"Then I suppose I must do without the awning for to-day?" I said cheerfully.

She wavered.

"I can put ye out some nice rosy apples in the front," she said wistfully.

I shook my head sternly.

"Here, come on," she cried to her husband, who was nodding over the fire, "just get up the awning for the lady. It's gettin' late for 'em now, that's one blessing," she added in a mutter as they set to work. I wondered whether she meant plums or artists, but merely murmured some commonplace about "trouble."

"We be born to troubles, mum," said the old man, philosophically, and I agreed with him as I returned to my friend on the other side of the street.

But after all, I do not think I have suffered so much over being the artist's companion as I have over being the artist's model: for this same lady friend of mine suddenly conceived the idea of painting my portrait. I do not know why. It could not have been my features, for she is so fond of telling me which is the ugly side of my face. I think it is probably because I am a patient model, being so inartistic, of course; if I were

artistic it would be an absurdity to think of sitting still—such a thing would dub one as an amateur at once. But I *can* sit still to be looked at, even to be squinted at, even to be poked about like the property baby in the pantomime, and I consider that it requires a patient person, as well as a stupid one, to submit to it. However, be that as it may, I consented, in a weak moment, to sit for her in a velveteen gown of a becoming tint, and I naturally expected that the most active feeling I should rouse in her would be gratitude. But from the very first she took up an aggrieved position. She complained, the whole time she was painting me, that the colour of my dress was rose dorée, the most expensive paint in her box; and she gave me a positive aversion to the whole costume by asking me abruptly, when she came to the wrinkles in the waist, whether I made my own clothes. It never seemed to occur to her that I might feel injured because she refused to use rose dorée, but tried to get the colour by nefarious means, so that in the finished portrait it looked a sort of muddy red; *that*, of course, could not be expected to hurt the sensibility of anyone so inartistic as myself. However, since this first experience, I have always been careful to choose my dresses with reference to the price of their colour. It might surprise anyone who was not an artist's model, to see me comparing Liberty's patterns with Newman's colour catalogue. But I have learnt I must never wear an ultramarine gown again, while my careful research taught me that vermilion was a cheap paint. That is why I resolved to have a scarlet cambric gown last summer, in spite of the people who raised objections in a friendly manner, and spoke of cows. As a matter of fact, I have suffered far more from artists than from cows, in consequence of that red dress.

I went to stay with the same friend in the same watering-place. I had suspicions of coming ill directly she was good enough to say I looked well in red, for she is not one to pay unnecessary compliments, and I knew quite well she only meant I was "sketchable," like the boat on the beach with a hole in it, and like the fisherman who never washed, but wore a yellow oilskin coat and a red scarf. For some time I comforted myself with the reflection that she would not want to paint me so long as she could get unwashen

natives and leaky boats: but, unfortunately, another artist—a man this time—came to stay with her, and between them my fate was sealed. We had a spell of cold weather just then, and my scarlet gown was intended for balmy days. Human consideration, however, could not be expected to belong to the artist, and I did not complain when they led me to a secluded corner of the beach and placed me out in the open in the teeth of a North-East breeze, while they settled themselves comfortably under the lee of the cliff, and began. I grew colder and colder. They painted faster and faster. At first I chatted gaily upon various subjects, but when I found that my remarks were wholly unheeded, or at most met by a vacant stare and a request to raise my chin, I naturally desisted. Then I was told I might talk as much as I liked if only I looked a little less like a mule, which was a picturesque way of telling me to talk on without minding whether they listened or not. Conversation did not flourish under these circumstances. They further complained that my complexion was terribly disappointing when they came to paint it, and I was gently urged to take a little walk to exercise myself. I returned after a breathless run inland, and was perfectly certain from their conscious glances that they had just been talking about me in a critical manner. This kind of treatment is not calculated to raise the jaded model's happiest expression, and I was glad when they abandoned the sketch altogether and carried me indoors to tea. When I had been thoroughly warmed by a cup of boiling tea, and was recovering my usual animation, they both looked at me with reproach, and asked innocently, "Why don't you look like that in the open air?" To me it seems odd that the pursuit of art should dull the ordinary instincts of humanity: but then, I am not artistic.

Sometimes it is quite a relief to meet an artist who does not treat one as a "property." At that same village on the East Coast was an impressionist. I am not quite clear what an impressionist is; I only know that he excites the utmost scorn in the breast of the artist who is not an impressionist, and uses an immense amount of paint. This particular one used to stroll on to the jetty to sketch what was apparently a bright blue sea and a bank of pink clouds, and then he would stroll off again, holding a picture of a dark grey sea and a bank of yellow clouds. He did not seem at all

likely to wish to paint anything so wholesome as a scarlet dress; so I gladly struck up a fearless acquaintance with him. Yet there was even something disappointing in our short intercourse with one another, though he did not want to sketch me, and never asked me to carry his camp stool, that being a useless article to an impressionist who is never more than a few seconds over a picture. But he unwittingly shook all my new found beliefs, and I had to unlearn almost everything I had begun to accept as the gospel of art.

The first time I saw him he commented on the purple mist over the marshes. Now, my other friend had told me only the day before it was blue. What was I to believe? If they had left me alone I should have called it white, and thought no more about it. But I am not artistic, of course. Another day he came over to tennis. The sun was setting at the time, which was unfortunate, as it set his politeness and his artistic sense at variance, and he had to struggle manfully to conceal his desire for his sketch-book, and to cover his disappointment with indifferent tennis. The score also became slightly involved at times.

"Fifteen all! What a picture it all makes against that mass of clouds—thirty-forty of course. I mean the pale purple mist rolling up against the dark purple sun, with the blue of the grass and the grey of your friend's blouse opposite—beautiful, quite beautiful!"

My friend's dress was pink, but I knew by this time when to be silent.

"My service? Ah, to be sure! Play! Do you know the haystack near the station, belonging to the little purple-roofed house?"

I remembered a red-tiled cottage, and nodded.

"Thirty-fifteen! Well, you have no idea what a charming sketch it would have made last night, just the blue stack against the purple house, with the pale purple mist rolling up behind, and the grey sky overhead—quite exquisite!"

I am quoting from memory, but I think I have sorted the colours correctly. At all events, it does not so much matter as long as there is sufficient purple in it, for that seemed to be his favourite colour. And when he told me, as a great secret, that the foam of the waves down by the breakwater was "purple, pale purple," only that very few people knew it, I groaned within me at the utter confusion of ideas to which my aspiring soul had



been brought, and I longed once more for the old days when my vision of art was bounded by the coal-scuttle and the top-boats, and all the other things.

For now, I am not even sure that my rose dorée gown may not, in the eyes of some, be considered purple, in which case an impressionist would find my portrait a less expensive one to paint than did my first friend, who is not an impressionist. But I frankly own I am not yet in a position to discuss the question, for I feel even more ignorant than in the unregenerate days when I had no artist friends. I dare not openly avow the colour of any single natural object: I am thankful that I no longer believe every tree to be green and every mist to be white, though I am still utterly incapable of a positive assertion to the contrary. I sometimes wax a little bolder on the subject of colour when perfectly certain no artist is near, but I have usually regretted my temerity. I shall never forget the awful wrath of a certain farmer, when I told him one day that his haystacks, the pride of his life, were pale purple, only that he could not see it because he was not artistic: of course he suffered merely from professional reasons—"and me that's never got up a bit of damp grass in my life, nor my father before me," was what he said. And talking of "shop," though it is perhaps rather beside the question, I may as well bring these desultory remarks to a close by relating a scrap of conversation we overheard one evening between two most artistic artists, as we were down by the river at sunset time. They were very splendidly got up, evidently of the impressionist school, and

had been abroad a good deal. Artists always have been abroad a good deal, however. They pulled up short just behind the old tub my friend was sketching.

"Say, old man, not bad that; eh? Blue boat, blue distance. What do you say?"

"Voilà notre affaire! Quite reminds one of Brittany, don't you twig?"

"Rather. Let's take it on."

Short pause while everything was unfolded. Then they began again.

"Say, old man, got a decent yellow? Sent to that beast M——'s (the "beast" shall be nameless) "and it's never come."

"Here you are. Always get mine in France; use such a lot; support two French families by my paints. Why don't you try T——'s?"

"Bit of a beast, eh? Had a row with him once, and couldn't think of a clever revenge, so had to leave it unfinished—unsatisfactory, very."

"Why didn't you offer to paint him?"

Another pause, broken by a scrap of a French song, and curses, not loud but deep, over the difficulties of the yellow. Then one of them flung down his brush impatiently and stretched himself.

"Le jeu ne va plus. Too dark, I'm off, old man."

But the other lingered behind to look up the river regretfully, and to sigh desperately, as only an artist can sigh when it is too dark to go on.

"Suppose I must come too. Nice little sketch, very—blue boat, blue distance."

And I felt quite certain I should *never* be artistic.

EVELYN SHARP.





ALBERICH AND WOGLINDE.

# WAGNER'S DRAMA: "DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN."

BY R. FARQUHARSON SHARP.

## I.

THAT Wagner's exceptional gifts as poet and dramatist should have been, to the world of amateurs at large, unduly overshadowed by his stupendous gifts as a musician is not surprising. It is the natural outcome of the scant attention which, until his time, was paid to the qualities of the libretto in opera. Nor was this unjustifiable; for hitherto the "book" of an opera had been regarded, roughly speaking, as a peg whereon to hang opportunities for musical display. Wagner, however, in pursuance of his theory that a lyrical drama, aided by all the resources of the painter and the mechanician, was to prove the highest form of art, completely reversed the positions of librettist and composer. In his "music-drama" (as he styled it) the form and character of the music was to depend entirely upon the nature and spirit of the poetry. To this theory he has given uncompromising effect in his trilogy, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, and justifies it as much by his remarkable adroitness in evolving a dramatic story from a confused mass of legend as by his unparalleled resource in musical illustration.

His colossal conception of a musical trilogy which, with its prelude, should occupy four evenings in representation, was of gradual growth, and was forced upon him by the nature of the subject matter of which he set himself to treat. It was during the early years of his political exile from Saxony that he framed the first idea of this work, whose composition, with several interruptions, occupied him for more than twenty years. According to his first design it was to consist of an opera dealing with the exploits of Siegfried, a hero of the early Scandinavian and Teutonic legends, preceded by an introductory opera to be called "Siegfried's Youth."

This scheme was gradually expanded as the dramatic theme acquired, in Wagner's mind, a symbolical as well as a distinctly national character; and eventually it took the unprecedented

form of a connected series of four "music-dramas," consisting of a prologue, *Das Rheingold*, followed by the trilogy, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Die Götterdämmerung*, the title given to the whole being *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. The libretto was finished in 1852, but it was not until 1876 that the work was produced, under the composer's direction, at the first Wagner Festival at Baireuth.

With regard to the revolution in operatic music here finally effected by Wagner, it may be briefly said that the absence from his dramas of the usual artifices of the operatic libretto necessarily induced in his music a similar estrangement from the ordinary operatic forms. It was not so much that he was an active opponent of these last, as that they were absolutely useless to him in the work he had undertaken. This new artistic creation was to be a drama enacted in an atmosphere of music; but always primarily a drama, the music being the spontaneous expression of emotion and, incidentally, the illustration of action.

This being so, it is easy to understand Wagner's abandonment of the stereotyped operatic forms—the "arias," "scenas," and the like. Melody was to be ever present, permeating the whole drama and forming its atmosphere, but not chopped up into certain lengths and presented intermittently to suit the exigencies of tradition.

The basis of his scheme of composition is his use of the "leitmotiv," the "leading" or "indicating" musical phrase. A mental mood (to use a somewhat clumsy translation of Wagner's expression) suggests to him a musical phrase; and as often as that particular mental mood is induced by the course of the drama, so often is that musical phrase used. The phrase thus becomes a kind of symbol (either of personal character, or of the nature of some event, or even of some particular object) and not a mere label. By the manipulation of these phrases—by combination of them, or variation of their orchestral colouring—Wagner calls into being a world of melody in which the personages of his



THE NIBELUNGS.

drama live, and provides these with a means whereby their every emotion is faithfully expressed. In one of his prose works he distinctly states that he intends the work to be addressed to the emotional, rather than the critical understanding.

With Wagner the orchestra becomes, as Mr. Krebhiel observes in his "Studies in the Wagnerian Drama," "pre-eminently the expositor of the drama. It has acquired some of the functions of the Greek Chorus, in that it takes part in the action to publish that which it is beyond the capacity of the personages alone to utter. The music of the instruments is the voice of fate, the conscience, and the will concerned in the drama. To those who wish to listen, it unfolds unerringly the thoughts, motives, and purposes of the personages, and lays bare the mysteries of the plot and counterplot." At the same time, from the musician's standpoint, an opera of Wagner's becomes a coherent symphony, as distinguished from a collection of heterogeneous musical ingredients.

But it is with Wagner the poet, the dramatist, the mythologist, that we are for the present more immediately concerned, and at the outset a trilogy of this nature and of these dimensions suggests comparison with the trilogies of the Greek dramatists. Music being an essential part of a Greek play, it may reasonably be said that modern opera is allied thereto more closely than modern drama. Moreover, Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen* (as has been observed by a recent critic) furnishes a parallel to the Greek trilogies, not only by reason of its form, but also by reason of a similar aim.

That is to say, Wagner may, in the following respects, be compared with the Greek tragic writers in his belief as a poet that the highest form of art is to be found in drama, that the fittest subjects for dramatic representation are such as may be found symbolised in the national legends and mythology, and that the drama should encourage, and be adapted to, the idiosyncracies and the national feeling of the people for whom it is created.

Although for purposes of representation *Der Ring des Nibelungen* is practically a tetralogy, it is nominally and designedly a trilogy, the first portion, *Das Rheingold*, being especially styled a "prologue" by the composer.

The lust for power, the loss of innocence, and the subsequent train of evils, an ultimate redemption

by means of self-sacrificing love, and the dawn of a newer and better era, is the theme of *Das Rheingold*. The Gold, the symbol of Innocence, is in the days of Innocence hidden in the depths of the Rhine, and is the plaything and joy of the Gods. In accordance with the inevitable decrees of a Fate which governs even the supreme gods of the Pagan mythology, the gold is stolen by one of the Nibelungs, the representatives of the powers of darkness, and fashioned into a ring, the possession of which carries with it the mastery of the world. Throughout the drama the main idea is the conflict of the powers of light and darkness, and the inevitable consequences of wrong-doing; while side by side with this runs the theme of the relentless approach of the destruction of the power of the old gods, the "Götterdämmerung" of the Teutonic, the "Ragnarok" of the Norse, mythology.

This consummation Wagner represents as the result of the conflict between gods, giants, dwarfs, and men for possession of the ring and its power, a possession which is always fraught with evil. A curse is made to follow inevitably upon this thirst for a mastery which is fated to be impotent and can only be obtained by a complete renunciation of all love. Thus a sin committed by Wotan, the chief of the gods, in his eagerness to obtain a power which he fancies will enable him to combat the inevitable, brings as its consequence his destruction and that of his fellows. The death of the last of them, however, takes the form of an expiatory self-sacrifice on the part of a woman, which removes the curse from the world, restores the gold to its original guardians in the depths of the Rhine, and ushers in a new order of things.

It needed masterly skill and a poet's imagination to fashion such a legend as Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen* out of the confused matter from which it took its origin. His original idea for a drama dealing with the life of the hero Siegfried, Wagner obtained from the old German "Nibelungenlied," a mixture of history and legend set forth in monotonous and uninteresting verse. This was a compilation, made about the end of the twelfth century, of the popular songs and traditions respecting the old northern myths. It is practically valueless to the mythologist from the fact that, as a result of the work of the early Christian monks who were their original translators from the Icelandic, almost every trace of the Pagan element in the stories has



LOKI.

been eliminated and their mythical character consequently destroyed.

For the legends which he eventually took as the foundation of his drama, Wagner had recourse to the old Norse and Icelandic Eddas—poems in which the Pagan myths are preserved—and to the Volsunga Saga, which is in the main a prose paraphrase of the older of the two chief Eddas. In the time of the despotic King Harold the Fair Haired, the Norwegians emigrated in large numbers to Iceland. Owing to the late date of the introduction of Christianity into that country—(and still more owing to the wisdom of the Christian missionaries who did not attempt to eradicate every vestige of the ancient customs, as had been the case in Germany)—the Norse myths and traditions lingered there unchecked. It is said to this day that the songs of Brunnhild may be heard in the remote Faroe Islands.

But while drawing upon the Scandinavian sources of legend, Wagner bore in mind that his art was to be national; and so he connected the Norse story of the conflicts of the gods with the Teutonic story of the hero Siegfried, the scene of whose exploits tradition laid on the Rhine. In the depths of the Rhine, too, was the traditional resting place of the gold whose rape was to entail so much disaster. To the same end, Wagner uses the German form of the names of the actors in his drama—thus we have Wotan for Odin, Donner for Thor, Siegfried for Sigurd, and so on. What alterations in the legends Wagner made for his dramatic purpose, and how far his ethical idea is identified with that of the original myths, will be easiest seen from a consideration of the plot of his trilogy and, first, of its important prologue.

This prologue, *Das Rheingold*, is in one continuous act of four scenes. The personages in it are all supernatural, and in it is found the root of all the subsequent action of the drama. The story opens in the age when the world was shaken with the continual conflict for power between the Gods, the Giants, and the Nibelungs,—the last a dwarf race who inhabit the bowels of the earth.

Like the Greek gods, those of the Norse legends were by no means exempt from human failings, nor was even the chiefest of them other than powerless in the hands of a Destiny which inevitably ruled all. Thus it is, as we shall see in *Das Rheingold*, in a last endeavour to combat the inevitable, that

Wotan, the supreme god, commits the sin which hastens the downfall of his power. The knowledge of Fate and of the Future lies alone with Erda, "the mother of gods and men, knowing neither time nor space," who is an embodiment of the pantheistic principle. The Giants appear as the personification of brute force and honesty; the Nibelungs as typical of selfish, loveless greed and cunning.

At the opening of the drama the Gold, the symbol of universal power, sleeps deep down amidst the waters of the Rhine, guarded by the three Rhine Maidens. From them it is stolen by Alberich, the Nibelung, who has learnt from them that he who would forswear love could gain the gold and the universal power its possession conferred. Until the theft of the gold, wrong was unknown. Wotan's power rested on the inviolability of his word; and it is not until the gold becomes a factor of evil in the world that he is tempted to break his faith, and so initiate the train of misfortunes which hasten his downfall.

It must be borne in mind that behind the immediate motives which actuate Wotan and the gods, there is always the foreboding of the inevitable approach of the "Götterdämmerung" when their power shall for ever disappear. In his desire for a more efficient protection against the forces which should be arrayed against him, and in the vain hope of repulsing them, Wotan had caused a splendid fortress—the "Asgard" of the myths, the "Walhall" of Wagner—to be built for him by the giants. In the second scene of *Das Rheingold* we find the giants Fafner and Fasolt claiming their reward, and Wotan most unwilling to pay the same. He has promised them the Goddess Freia—goddess of love, youth, and beauty—in return for their work. Freia (to whom Wagner has, for a dramatic reason, given the attribute of another goddess of the Scandinavian mythology) is the guardian of the magic apples, the eating of which perpetually renews the youth of the gods: hence Wotan's unwillingness to part with her. But he is obliged to keep to his bond; and in his dilemma he summons the aid of the mischievous fire-god Loge, who had been the one to persuade him to enter into the ill-fated compact.

Loge—the Norse Loki, who has something in common with the Mercury of Roman mythology—is the typification of the principle of destruction,





and is a thoroughly unscrupulous character, hated but feared by the other gods. Bidden by Wotan to discover some ransom for Freia, he declares that the gold is the only thing in the world which "surpasses the worth and joy of woman," and persuades the giants to accept it instead of the beautiful Freia. He tells Wotan of the theft of the gold by Alberich, who has fashioned it into a ring which confers universal power upon the wearer, and urges him to gain possession of it by fair means or foul. On Wotan's proudly refusing to stoop to such baseness, Freia is carried off by the giants, and immediately the gods, being bereft of the source of their youth, begin to grow gray and old. Seeing this, spurred on by the taunts of Loge, and bethinking him of the power the ring will give him, Wotan at last agrees to take the fatal step and descends with Loge to Nibelheim, the home of the Nibelungs.

Here, in the recesses of the earth, dwell the race of dwarfs whom Alberich, by means of the ring, has bent to his will and compelled to dig the stores of precious metals from the ground for his enrichment. By an ignoble trick on Loge's part Alberich is captured and carried off by the two gods to the mountains, where the rest of the gods await their return. Thus has Wotan broken the laws which alone protect him from the powers of darkness, the curse of the gold is upon him and his doom is hastened.

Alberich, to save his life, is compelled to summon the Nibelungs and bid them bring his treasures from below. In his rage he lays a curse upon the ring, which Wotan snatches from his finger; and so begins the train of ills which follow its fortunes. The treasure is heaped up and offered to the giants as ransom for Freia, even the "Tarn-

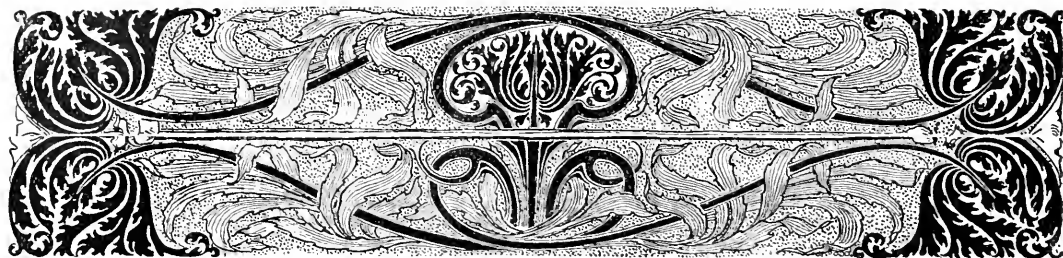
helm" (Alberich's magic cap which renders the wearer invisible) being conceded. The Giants, however, are not satisfied and demand the ring, which Wotan has determined to keep for himself. Enraged at his refusal to part with it, the giants are about to break off the bargain when, rising from the ground, is seen the mysterious form of the all-wise Erda. She solemnly warns Wotan of the danger into which his wrongful desires are leading him, and bids him give up the ring. This he at last does, and Freia is ransomed.

At once Wotan beholds the working of the curse in the fight which takes place between the giants for possession of the ring. Fasner kills Fasolt and retreats with the treasure and the ring. Then, as Wotan turns to go with the gods to his new "Valhall," the full significance of his sin flashes upon him. He has countenanced wrong-doing and has caused murder, a terrible curse has entered the world as consequence of his sin, and he must devise some plan to set the world aright.

His purpose is soon formed. He will beget a race of heroes, of whom the last shall, by the help of Wotan's own magic sword, win back the ring and restore it to the keeping of the Rhine Maidens. Thus will this hero restore innocence to the world, and also prove a stout defender to the weakening power of the gods in the face of their approaching fate; and in this hope Wotan passes with his peers over the rainbow bridge into Valhall.

And here the curtain drops upon the prologue. Henceforward the drama deals with the tremendous consequences of Wotan's violation of moral law; and it is in this, and in the irony of his useless striving against the inevitable, that lies the real tragedy of the trilogy which follows.





## A COSTLY FREAK.

BY MAXWELL GRAY,

*Author of "The Silence of Dean Maitland."*

### CHAPTER III.

NEVER for one moment did Mr. Ray question the miraculous origin of those accurately printed and quite genuine Bank of England notes, with their numbers and abounding detail. The age of miracles was not past; he had faithfully, strenuously and humbly, in fasting and watching, begged a certain sum of money from his Maker, and there, between the leaves of his Bible, lay that very sum, together with a certain divine overplus. What could be clearer or more simple?

Yet there was something awful in the very greatness of this mercy, before which his simple spirit bowed; so august an event, so heavenly a distinction, was not lightly to be told, even to his wife. No, he could not tell her yet—what were they that a miracle should be worked for them? He stood upon holy ground, he put the shoes from off his feet and prostrated his soul in sacred reverence before this great mystery—the divine nature stooping to the need of poor humanity. Yet were the miracles of sunrise, and of daily food upon his table as great and solemn evidences of divine care and forethought. But usual marvels do not impress.

"Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

But the spirit of man is too feeble, and too much

cramped and cabined by its sensuous hull, to rise often or for long to a full sense of the divine presence, of which the tangible universe is the garment to make it visible, as Goethe says, "the living robe of the Godhead."

Yet this great thing, the positive sensuous assurance of that spiritual presence, working beyond and above the ken of sense, had befallen William Ray, even as it befell Moses when the bush flamed unconsumed before him, as it befell Elijah on the lonely mountain, when, after earthquake, fire and tempest, he heard the still small voice.

Uplifted in soul, thrilling with holy emotion, quivering with joy, yet calm and solemn, this single-hearted man accepted the glory that had come to him through a channel so small and poor, clearly apprehending the nobler meaning of those timely loaves and fishes, and meeting the day's trivial round as usual, though with a deepened sense of the sublimity and significance of life.

His family were ignorant of the signal mercy and answer to prayer for which they were bidden to give thanks; and though they heard him read in an unusually moved voice of the miracle of the loaves, and observed the unearthly light upon his face, they were neither surprised nor agitated. During this reading, indeed, Mrs. Ray caught herself considering if the cold beef would last for Sunday, bearing in mind the fact that Millie would

dine at home on both days. This poor lady was aware that her temptation was that of Martha, to whom her husband sometimes likened her. To correct this, her chief frailty, one of her daughters had been commissioned by her father to illuminate the words in which Martha's immortal rebuke was conveyed to her, and this illumination had been placed conspicuously over Mrs. Ray's bedroom mantelpiece in such wise that she could not fail to see it from her bed or on her lying down and rising up. She was indeed cumbered with much serving, and careful and troubled about many things, yet not less mindful of the one thing needful than many less heavily burdened.

"Going out, and your sermon not written!" was her amazed comment upon her husband's announcement to that effect after breakfast. Whereupon he smiled and said that his sermon was ready in his heart.

"Well, dear, I do hope you will at least not try to preach extempore," she returned, "the congregation won't stand it; besides, your nerves will be all to fiddle-strings. Still, if you are really going to Wilchester this morning, you may as well get me a packet of that excellent tea they sell at Winslow's; it is quite reasonable, as well as superior to any we can get here."

"Martha, Martha!" he said with half playful rebuke, "Yes, my dear, you shall have the tea. But learn to trust, learn to trust more."

"I wish the grocers would," she thought. She revered her husband as a man of saintly life and unworldly heart, but she could never lose sight of the fact that dinners were as necessary and expensive to saints as to the most sinful of mankind. And perhaps she was not far wrong in holding it a serious duty to set the most suitable food she could get before her husband, a homely duty that was the daily source of much warfare to her soul and much weariness to her flesh.

"I wouldn't be a Martha if I could afford to be a Mary, William," she observed, while moving about and clearing the breakfast-table.

"But only one thing is needful, dear Edith," he returned with a tenderness that carried the worn and life-wearied woman back to the golden days of youth and romance, when she had indeed been a Mary, and the penniless young curate had been to her as one of heaven's youngest-eyed angels, but lightly draped in mortal flesh, with wings only half-veiled.

Lost in the pleasantness of that brief retrospect, she pursued the homely task to which she had not been born, still with an under-current of speculation on the cold beef, when she spied and picked up a man's handkerchief from behind the door. Thereupon her vexed imagination straightway pictured her husband bereft of that necessity and symbol of civilization through half a wintry day, and she looked out of the window to see if it were possible to send Bella after him with it. But she quickly perceived that it was of daintier fabric than Mr. Ray's, and, on closer examination, found a delicate, scarcely perceptible odour as of white rose. The initials, G.R.B., proclaimed that it was certainly not her husband's, but had, probably, been dropped by Mr. Burroughes the night before, whereupon, with Martha-like tidiness, she placed it in a large envelope, and sealed it ready for an opportunity to send back.

Mr. Ray, in the meantime, arrived in Wilchester, which was some five miles distant, by the most ancient and obvious method of locomotion, and did not forget his Martha's tea. He changed one of the miraculous notes into cash, not without a faint shudder, as of sacrilege committed, when the crisp and snowy paper was fingered carelessly by the cashier as a thing of no importance. For one giddy moment it seemed like bartering consecrated wine; then he remembered the twelve baskets of fragments gathered up by special command, that nothing might be lost. A deep, uncomprehended feeling made it impossible to change the note nearer home; it might be a reverent fear of degrading the day's sacred and sublime experience to the level of common talk which impelled him to guard his august secret and fence it about with an impenetrable Isis veil. The day being mild and sunny, he longed to take Walter for a drive forthwith, the more so as it was Millie's half-holiday, and she might go with him. But in his simplicity he was shy of launching out too expensively at first, and imagined his parishioners stupefied with amazement at sight of himself and family flaunting about in carriages. Yet when, after a simple repast of bread and cheese, he reached home towards dusk, laden with a bottle of good port, a chicken, and such like, for Walter, it must be confessed that there was a momentary regret, deep down in his heart, that he had specified a sum which, when he came

to think of laying it out, was inadequate for his purpose.

But how was that momentary lack of faith and gratitude rebuked, when, on entering his home, he was greeted by his wife, radiant with pleasure and excitement.

"Dear William," she said, having opened the door in the dusk for him and given him a welcoming kiss; "you were right. Man's necessity is God's opportunity. Oh! my dear, I will try to have faith, as you have."

Then in the dingy parlour, now warm and cheery in the firelight, the events of the day were poured into the curate's astonished and delighted ears. First, the arrival of a case of fine old crusted port, addressed in an unknown hand, to the Rev. William Ray, with best wishes for Master Walter's better health, and concerning the sender of which no information whatever was obtainable. Next, the equally unexpected advent of a barrel of oysters in the same mysterious manner. More surprising still, a letter by mid-day post, containing the first half of a banknote for five pounds, addressed in type-writing, and with the type-written intimation that the second half would follow by the next post.

"They might have kept their beastly oil, though," observed Walter, referring, with a grimace, to a large bottle of that nourishing and expensive, but singularly nauseous stuff from the cod's liver; "No wonder they do good by stealth. I should think they just *would* blush to find *that* fame."

"Walter," exclaimed his father, "this is no time for jesting. He who feeds the young ravens and prepared a table for David in the wilderness, sends these things for your need. My boy, you must strive to be worthy of these signal mercies. Edith, do you remember our faithless fears of yesterday, with what difficulty we strove to believe what I then said: 'The Lord will provide?' He *has* provided. Let us give thanks."

"But still, dear William," urged Mrs. Ray, when this act of worship was done; "we must not be unmindful of the human channels through which divine mercies are permitted to flow;" here she looked at Millie, who blushed, and she thought of the warm overcoat so much desired for Walter, exactly fitting him, and with a fur collar singularly like the muff her daughter's godmother had given her the year before, but which, of late, had mysteriously ceased to comfort Millie's chill-blained

hands. This coat had been amongst the shower of good things descending upon Walter on that eventful day. "The age of miracles is past," she added.

"Woman!" cried Mr. Ray, with an austerity that went through the family like a thunderclap; "*Dare* you say so? The age of miracles is *not* past." Then Mrs. Ray, remembering Millie's scanty resources and generous self-denial, agreed with her husband in her heart, though she decided to acquaint him with the particular human channel of the coat, while Millie had a great mind to divulge the secret of the oysters, that she knew to be due to Nurse Ethel's slender purse.

It was now time for Mr. Ray to display his purchases, briefly observing aside to his wife that they were a direct answer to prayer. Thus the family rejoiced.

Bella broke two tea cups; the kitten was more madly merry than ever, and flew round after its tail until it looked like a swift spinning wheel of grey fur; Buffie picked everybody's pocket in succession, and had to be seriously rebuked. And then on a sudden, when Mrs. Ray was handing his first cup of tea to her husband, she observed a strange grey pallor on his face and saw him sway from side to side and fall helpless.

Excitement, strong emotion, the long walk, insufficient food, talking at the parochial visits he had paid along the road, together with the climax on reaching home, had wrought upon the old man's declining strength and produced a faintness, from which he was soon recovered. But his wife remembered that swoon afterwards, to her abounding sorrow.

Millie had not yet told her parents of her private trouble—she could not bring herself to dash their pleasure on this exciting evening. Nor did she tell her father of her afternoon's visit to the rectory and its ostensible cause—the restoration of George Burroughes' pocket handkerchief.

No one remembered the episode of the handkerchief. In the first place it had not been missed, for when Mr. Burroughes stepped into his own hall on the previous evening, his servant had observed that his master's coat was splashed with mud, and George had taken it off there and then and given it to the man to clean, going upstairs in his shirt-sleeves to dress. The first thing he did on reaching his room was to sit down in his impulsive

way and write to the Marquis that he could not, would not, and should not ask Mr. Ray to leave, much less discharge him. This done, and the letter sent straight to the post, he dressed and went down to dinner in the highest spirits.

"Well, George!" asked the cousin maligned by Millie Ray for the crimes of high hand-shaking and a society manner, "and what did his high mightiness, the Marquis of Carabas, say?"

"The usual rot!" returned her cousin, with elegant brevity. "By the way," he added, as if by an after-thought, "he is going to stand us the credence-table."

"My dear!" exclaimed his mother, "how generous and how delightful!"

"George's notion of rot!" observed his cousin, showing some pretty white teeth between full red lips. "My dear auntie, could anyone but a clergyman be so stolidly ungrateful? Really, George, you are quite too refreshing. First you pick the poor man's pockets——"

"Not I. Why, the old beggar is rolling in riches. A little bleeding would do him good. But I didn't beg, Maud, upon my word, though it would have been a holy and pious thing to make him shell out. I merely said the thing was wanted, and he came down with his dust like a shot. After all, what's twenty-five pounds?" observed the callous George.

"Well, it's a pony, isn't it?" returned Maud, "at least, so Jim says."

"He'd put it on a card at baccarat and lose it with a grin. He gave me a second pony, as Maud calls it—very antiquated slang, Maud—towards church repairs, mother."

"Robber! Auntie, what have you to say to this clerical Jack Sheppard? The moment he meets a rich, but honest, Marquis, up goes the ecclesiastical pistol, and the unlucky nobleman is ordered to stand and deliver."

"That he may go to heaven the lighter," added the unblushing rector, while his mother merely laughed a silent, contented, inward laugh that made her diamonds shiver the lights into little rubies and emeralds.

"It was a mercy that George wasn't ordered to stand and deliver with all this booty upon him, Maud," she said tranquilly.

"I don't know: a mercy for his reverence, perhaps. What have you done with your loot, George? I

wish I'd been talking to rich marquises, I'm so desperately hard up, I'm positively going about in rags."

"Chiffons are a good deal worn, aren't they? Well, you shall have a new gown if you're a good girl. I bought a dozen yesterday for the almshouse widows, half-a-sovereign apiece, of the best black bombazine. I'll make it a baker's dozen and give you one."

"I should like to know where he's put all this gold, auntie, shouldn't you?"

"It was notes, not gold," George corrected. "By the way, I hope to goodness I haven't put them—oh! yes, I remember, it's all right. Yes, mother, it's quite true, cheques *have* been blown off my study table into the geranium bed, and it will be cast up against me to the day of my death—but I draw the line at notes, I assure you."

"And nothing will make him divulge the hiding-place, after kindling one's avarice," added Maud, "Jim says——"

"Jim!" growled George with indescribable contempt, "Jim!"

"What of Jim?" returned Maud, with a smile of angelic innocence.

"Only if I were in your place, I wouldn't quote him *quite* so openly, that's all," he said with an expression of hopeless and injured misery.

Miss Ascott's picturesquely cut corsage quivered—a square cut was then in vogue—and the string of pearls claspings her round white throat shot many soft lights abroad. She bent her nicely fringed and curled dark head over a glass, from which she pretended to drink, and then looked up with the most innocent gaze in her large velvety eyes. "Do you know," she said gravely, "you are *so* like Jim in some ways? 'Why in the world are you always quoting that fellow, George?' cries poor dear Jim, about once a week. One naturally quotes one's cousins, you know. But about this marquis now, he's rich, and a widower; I'm poor, and a spinster—why not *annex* this marquis?"

"You have, *pro tem.*," muttered George, half pacified.

"We're to take you to Carabas Castle to luncheon," Mrs. Burroughes said. "What cares the marquis for old women and young clergymen?"

"He's about the biggest blackguard out," added George, thoughtfully.

"Yet his gold adorns the altar, and pious old

curates are dismissed at his nod," commented Maud, placidly folding her plump white arms.

"No," said George, sitting up, squaring his shoulders and looking straight ahead past his mother, "not that: Mr. Ray is *not* to be asked to resign."

"But my *dear* George!" cried his mother, "after all that the marquis has said! And what *will* the Hintons say, and the Screwbys, and the Levesons? Then Mr. Ray's troublesome views, and the services that he continually spoils!"

"They may say what they will," replied George, throwing back his head, "Ray is worth the whole blessed lot put together!"

"But, my dear, you owe the living to the marquis!"

"And a howling shame, too! that such a man should have church patronage!"

"Only listen to George defying the Carabasian thunderbolts!" commented Maud. "But you as good as promised him that Mr. Ray should go, George."

"I'm in a hole, a beastly hole," replied George, remembering the unlucky issue of King Herod's promise to the dancer, "but I've just written and told Carabas that the thing can't be done. If this old scoundrel can't say his prayers where poor old Ray spoils the intoning, he may say them in Rigden Church, or Highdown, or anywhere he likes—and wherever he goes he'll say them under a worse parson."

"But no one questions Mr. Ray's merits," objected Mrs. Burroughes, roused to active interest. "It is his unsuitability to the parish that makes it so awkward. Elsewhere the man would be a treasure."

"It's too late for the poor old fellow at his time of life to make a new start. He's sixty-five if he's a day," the rector replied.

"He isn't a dey, he looks more like a knight," replied the unabashed Maud, who owned to a weakness for her cousin's curate, "I wish you would peel some walnuts for me, George: they are ageing, like poor Mr. Ray. Auntie, might I give some of these white muscatels? Walter Ray likes these muscatels."

"Walter needs something better than grapes to keep him alive," said George, repeating the doctor's prescription, and the trouble it had caused Mr. Ray, and describing the tea-table and the butter episode, while he peeled the walnuts.

"I cannot understand their extreme poverty," commented Mrs. Burroughes, "I am afraid there must be bad management. We know that a hundred and fifty a year is not wealth, but still, there are but three to live on it. Millie Ray's salary must help."

"Hm!" growled George, holding his glass to the light and wrinkling his forehead.

"That has struck me too," added Maud, thoughtfully nibbling a candied peach, and then there was a brief silence in the pleasant and comfortable room, with its soft, shaded lights, crackling wood fire in the polished grate, its flowers and well selected artistic plenishing—a briefer, less constrained silence than that in the Rays' dingy little parlour, where the evil-smelling lamp scarcely lighted the hushed family group, and where the curate was still absorbed in his unspoken prayer.

"I hope," said Mrs. Burroughes, drawing a shawl round her shoulders with a cosy shiver as she rose from the table, "I do hope there is a good fire in the drawing-room this raw night."

"I'll make you a roaring fire, auntie," said Maud, as they passed through the well-warmed hall, "I think you have taken a little chill."

Millie Ray was just then shivering through the cold and draughty passage, after her piano exercise, a very different spectacle from the rosy, round-limbed Maud in her jewels and picturesque attire. The latter's touch on the Broadwood grand was light, firm, and well trained, and her dreamy melodies charmed her aunt into a pleasant fireside slumber till George appeared, when there was a game of chess, sadly interrupted by the fun and frolic of the two cousins. More music followed, and George's fine voice was heard in "I fear no foe in shining armour" and "Adelaide," and all the time, in the dingy parlour, by the evil-smelling lamp and skimpy fire, Mr. Ray was praying, silently praying.

## CHAPTER IV.

MILLIE RAY returned from Little Buckley on half-holidays, ostensibly before the mid-day dinner, but in reality with the best speed she could muster, just as the family were finishing their repast, when the table presented a dishevelled and uninviting aspect; and the potatoes, jostled by rice pudding,

and long past the alluring stage of smoking hot, were soddened by condensed steam.

Had Millie been a boy, care would have been taken to keep a plate hot for her, but, being a girl, she scouted the idea of giving so much trouble, not that it had occurred to anybody to take it; besides, her mother would have been shocked to think that a daughter of hers could care about her dinner. So Millie never enjoyed what that singular people, the Yankees, call a square meal—by this adjective divulging their typical mental angularity and lack of the finish, suavity and breadth indicated by things round—hence her body showed angles where winning curves should be. Meals were square enough for the hungriest Yankee at Little Buckley, it is true; but the mental pre-occupation supplied by Mr. Luster's (to Millie) hopelessly insoluble problem of how many men it would take to mow thirty acres of grass in a year, supposing ten could mow twenty in a month; or, supposing twelve cows to yield six pounds of butter a day, how many would yield forty in a week, was conducive neither to appetite or digestion. So Millie, having hurried breathless home, hurried through a pretence of cold beef and damp potatoes, through the domestic duties sequent on the mildest repast to the ladies of a house unfurnished with the harmful, but not unnecessary, cook and parlourmaid, and then, after hurrying through some sort of toilet, finally hastened in the wintry air to the rectory, arriving there with a nose of the unbecoming hue induced by combined indigestion and frost. She asked for Mrs. Burroughes, with whom she had an errand of strict privacy, and was completely confounded and non-plussed at being shewn into the presence of the whole family.

"Oh! I came early because I wanted to see you," she explained, brusquely and breathlessly, to her hostess.

"What a singular reason for calling," Maud Ascott commented, after offering her hand in the high fashion which kindled such scorn in Millie, but which this aspersed lady accompanied with a cordial charm, a little spoilt by a dash of patronage, probably unconscious.

"Yes; I had something to say," continued Millie, with the startled gaze and fierce manner of a young savage.

"How deliciously original!" said the gracious and dulcet-voiced lady, to whom both words and looks were, in side-long fashion, addressed. "People *never* have anything to say when they call, especially at Freshford."

A mad desire to snub this serenely-smiling damsel, vested in conscious beauty, self-complacency, a tailor-made gown of marvellous fit and a waistcoat of Indian gold embroidery, tortured Millie and made her scowl darkly, but ineffectually. She became conscious all at once of gloves, now deprived of the sheltering muff recently converted to Walter's collar; she knew that a button had deserted them and the finger-tips were splitting; but knew not why these disasters forced themselves upon her attention at that precise moment. Unobservant George Burroughes could have told her why. He could not help contrasting the two young women to the advantage of his cousin, whose plain gown so well set off her full yet supple figure and threw up the warm hues of her face with its bright eyes and crimson lips, slightly disclosing pretty teeth.

From her superior height she seemed to be graciously hovering over the ungracious and dowdy Millie, whose attire had apparently been casually thrown upon her, and whose pinched features, hair smoothed flatly away from an exposed forehead, and hat shaped to rise above fashionable fluffs, compared most unfavourably with Maud's confident bearing, well-curled fringe, and level brows. Maud suggested opulence of youth, womanhood, and beauty, all of which in Millie were skimped and scant. Millie was like a colt running wild and ungroomed on barren moors; Maud resembled its sleek, well-broken sister, in shining silver harness, well fed, and fresh from a clean warm box. Yet there is promise in many a rough unbroken colt.

"How is Walter to-day, Miss Ray?" George asked. "I was sorry to find your father so anxious about him,"

"Anxious! Poor father! he is never anything else about Walter."

"The only son, and so delicate," Mrs. Burroughes commented.

"Yes, my father would cheerfully see the rest of us fried for his dinner if it would make Wattie well," replied Millie: "and we would all three cheerfully jump into the frying-pan to save him. Poor Wattie! Mr. Burroughes, your book has

made him so happy. He took it to bed, and has got some of it by heart already." Millie's face was changed now, the pinched look succeeded by an indescribable glow, the large eyes shining with a sweet, steady light.

"Do you like Tennyson, Miss Ray?" asked George. "My cousin says he is too pretty and sentimental for her."

"Rather too fine and finicking," the latter added.

"Oh! Miss Ascott, finicking! I only know what Walter read out in his bed last night, and said off at table to-day, but I thought that beautiful—a revelation. Why, even my father, who thinks poetry dangerous and frivolous, unless it's very old or dry or Greek or sacred, liked this—at least, that part about 'lifting hands of prayer.'"

"Both for themselves and those who call them friend," George quoted, in a half-conscious growl of subdued bass. "You must give me the pleasure of lending you all Tennyson's works, Miss Ray," he added.

Millie smiled and declined. She had no time to read: was a working woman.

"Oh, come now, isn't to-day half-holiday? and are there no evenings?"

"Not for frivolous pleasures."

"But to-morrow is Sunday," urged Mrs. Burroughes. "Surely that is a day of rest."

"Not to clergymen's families. Besides, my father's views are strict. All profane literature is put away from Saturday till Monday."

"Well! it certainly is a howling shame that you should grind in the Sunday School after your week's work!" cried George, rising and pervading the apartment in his large and vigorous way.

"Sunday Schools have always struck me as a singularly vicious form of tyranny," added Maud, suppressing a yawn, putting her glass to her eyes and looking out of the window at something presumably of more interest than Sunday Schools.

"Because it is only busy, tired, people who teach," added Millie. "It is not as if Sunday teachers were idle, smart people, who have nothing in the world to do all the week but amuse themselves."

"A nasty one for you, Maud," murmured her cousin, *sotto voce*, in passing.

"I think, as parson of this parish," he added

aloud, "I must set up a Sunday class of Tennysonian readings for tired people. What do you say, mother? Shall we enlist Miss Ray at once as head scholar?"

"Oh! If I had to preach," Millie burst out, "I should describe heaven as a place where people had time to read poetry and the last new novel, and there were no Sundays, and no parish, and no old clothes to mend, and people never lost their situations."

"Now, why that climax, Miss Ray, if one may ask?" said George, with interest.

Tears were in Millie's eyes. The momentary self-forgetfulness, induced by enthusiasm, was gone. She was half-ashamed of her directness and force of speech.

"Of course, you have a right to ask what I am silly enough to talk about before people," she replied; "but I didn't mean to—that is—I came on purpose to—I mean, if Mrs. Burroughes had been alone. But I will come another day," she concluded, rising, and suddenly remembering the handkerchief. "This is yours: you dropped it last night," she said, abruptly giving George the parcel, which he took with an abstracted air and immediately forgot, placing it absently on his mother's work-table, whence it subsequently travelled unopened to the limbo of her work-basket.

By this time the purport of poor Millie's visit was evident to the meanest capacity. So she was left to pour out her trouble, with which she wished not to distress her parents, into the ear of her hostess, who, she had thought, might be able to help her to find some employment near home.

"I don't care what I do," she said, "so long as I can do it. What can I do? Nothing in particular; but I'd do it with all my might. No, I don't know anything to speak of. I can sing a little; but I can't play the piano if anyone is listening. I've read nothing but my father's old books. I can construe Virgil, and know the Latin Accidence; yes, I can read Latin, but can't write it: I know enough Greek to blunder through the New Testament, which I have by heart. Arithmetic I can do, if not mental. I think I could keep accounts—easy ones. I can cook, and clean a house and do plain needlework. But the great thing is to find something near home. My father and mother



want me for so many things, and my being at home makes it much less dull for poor Walter. Besides," she added, as if from a strikingly original after thought, "I like it."

"What a perfect young savage!" was Maud's subsequent comment to her cousin on Millie, whom she had previously seen only as part of a small crowd. "One knows that Freshford has not advanced since the year One. But I'd no idea it produced such oddities."

"Oddity," returned George, with dignity, "is no word for a lady who is neither commonplace nor conventional."

"Well, not *exactly* conventional," Maud said. "She escapes that stigma, I admit. But, if Millie Ray is a typical specimen of the Freshford damsel, do let us have a tea-party of them while I'm here. It would be as refreshing as an ice in July. Fancy doing nothing whatever the whole Sunday long; not so much as a novel to bless oneself with. Between ourselves, my good George, I suspect my pet curate is a bit of a Blue Beard in his own house. Who shall find me a virtuous man? His price is above a brewer's income, and when found he's sure to be more or less of a tyrant or a prig."

"Ray may be narrow, but he's thorough. But what right have such as we to criticize such a man as William Ray?"

"Pray don't eat me up alive, George. On the whole, perhaps one would rather not dine with St. John the Baptist—with all due deference."

"Herod might give one better wine, my dear, and more variety of dishes: though at least one dish at his table was in dubious taste. People have the defects of their qualities."

"And the qualities of their defects. Do you like the qualities of mine, George?"

"I never see your defects. A charitable wink is all they extract from your devoted cousin."

"Maud," Mrs. Burroughes said, with unwonted seriousness that Saturday evening, before dinner, "I have one earnest request to make to you. Don't play with George."

"Play with him, my dearest Aunt Carrie! Not play chess with poor George!" with a piteous air of infantile distress.

"You may play chess, but not mate, with him, my dear. Oh, it's all very amusing for you, no doubt; but it's death for a man like George. He

has but one heart—a good one; *you* can get them by the dozen."

Maud laughed a laugh of intense amusement. "Poor dear George! Dear Aunt Carrie! Don't you think he is nearly big enough to take care of himself? Don't be afraid. I shan't annex George's heart. It's far too tough and well-seasoned."

"Then, why tease him about your cousin Jim? See how jealous he was!"

"Oh, that is no proof! What man can hear another quoted by a woman, without mortal jealousy?"

"Not if she be a pretty woman and he in love with her!"

"Pretty! That word belongs to old-fashioned Arcadia, dear. A woman must be rather more than pretty, and may be rather less, to influence a *fin de siècle* man. A pink and white simper on a big-eyed wax doll-face is nothing in these days. *Chic, savoir faire*, tact, manner, and dress, not clothes, these fetch the men of to-day."

"And you have them all, besides being dreadfully handsome and entertaining," moaned the hapless mother. "But here he comes," she added, as the subject of their discussion sauntered in, abstracted and languid, *point d'entrée* for the evening, but with two long furrows on his broad brow and an eye that communed with the carpet, instead of adoring the beauty of the well-attired Maud. Too well-attired, possibly, since her aunt had that evening suggested that she might with advantage dress a little less and wear a little more, and thus avoid causing great scandal to the parish clerk, who had just encountered her in the hall, on his arrival with the Sunday hymns and christenings. That evening's table talk, sustained by the ladies, with an occasional hardly-extracted monosyllable from the master of the house, languished and languished, until it came to a dead pause, ended by George with the following seemingly irrelevant observation:—

"Millie Ray is not such a bad-looking girl after all."

"On the contrary, she looked the pink of virtue and primrose of propriety," his cousin replied. "No one would imagine her the heroine of a scandal, I suppose."

"Poor girl," added Mrs. Burroughes: "pity she's so shy. She has to leave her situation and

wants to get another before her father knows she has lost this. The Screwbys are wanting a nursery governess. I'm afraid they would not care to take Miss Ray, though."

"I don't know why," said George, majestically, "the fact that a young lady's father is not a beneficed clergyman, and that she is obliged to work for her living, should expose her to contemptuous observations."

"My *dear* George, I meant nothing that was not most kind!" exclaimed his mother, aghast. "Miss Ray called expressly to consult me about a situation, and wished you to be asked to help her if you heard of anything she could do that was not derogatory to her father's position."

"Well, then, let's set up a companion for you, and have Miss Ray. What she wants is rest and a little amusement. The more I see of the Rays the better I like them."

"Does Mr. Ray still pray for you, George?" Maud asked, gently: whereupon he blushed savagely. "To judge by results I should fear—"

"Maud!"

It is one of the weaknesses inseparable from human nature to resent one's moral and spiritual improvement being prayed for by a fellow-sinner, and George Burroughes had a good deal of human nature. Therefore he had been moved to unchristian wrath by Mr. Ray's kind proposal to perform this charitable office for him, on the occasion of a slight difference of doctrinal opinion between the two, in which Mr. Ray had too rashly assumed the reign of Cimmerian darkness in the mind, and worldly Gallioism in the heart, of his rector. Thinking of this to-day, with the memory of that piteous quiver in the old man's face, George regretted his wrath much and his mention of it at home more.

"That old man," he said within himself, "is gaining a great hold upon me: but I doubt if I shall ever be fit to black his boots."

"I suppose, mother," he said, in the course of the evening, after another long silence. "that I ought not to deny you and Maud the pleasure of exulting over the folly and misfortune of a fellow-mortal—"

"George!" cried Maud, with inexpressible delight, "I *knew* you'd done something silly, I saw it the moment you came in! You've gone and proposed to Millie Ray!"

"I don't know why," returned George, with another accession of injured majesty, "the name of a young lady, entitled on every hand to the profoundest respect, should be made the subject of perpetual jest. To me it scarcely seems in the best taste. I was merely going to observe, my dear mother, that I've lost the Marquis's two ponies."

"His ponies! My dear George, I never saw him drive anything but horses in my life. I don't like you to have dealings in horse-flesh with a man of that stamp—it is scarcely clerical."

"Dear Aunt Carrie, it's quite the most clerical thing in the world, I assure you. This kind of pony has no legs, but takes to itself wings," Maud explained.

"If you have played me a practical joke, Maud," continued George, "I think it has gone far enough."

"My dear children, what *do* you mean? What has Maud to do with strayed ponies?"

"Indeed I am innocent, George. Auntie, your son accuses me of stealing fifty pounds, that is all."

"Smithson is much upset," continued George, describing how Smithson had taken the coat, in the pocket of which was a letter-case wherein the notes had been placed, to brush, on the moment of his master's return, and how next morning the coat pocket had been found empty; further, how diligent search in every conceivable place in the house had discovered no trace of letter-case, letters, or bank notes, and probably never would. "It's not so much the money," continued George, "but the domestic upset and suspicion. The servants will probably give warning to a man—that is, to a maid. And I must put it in the hands of the police. I've got the numbers in my note-book, luckily; that's one comfort, to be sure. Then there was half a sermon in the case—I meant it for to-morrow."

"My dear George, take comfort. Who knows but this may be the turning-point in the life of some poor, but dishonest, thief. The reading of that half-sermon—by the way, don't you think you might have put the case in your overcoat pocket?"

But, being tormented neither by the sensation of red-hot coals consuming the bones, and rats gnawing the muscles, which mortals call rheumatism, or that of sharp knives stabbing, and red-hot wires jerking the body and brain, known

as neuralgia, never being convulsed and suffocated by asthma, strangled by laryngitis, or stifled by bronchitis, unaware that he possessed a liver, and blissfully ignorant from experience of the internal structure of the complicated organism, man, George habitually put nothing between himself and the weather but such garments as were visible, and one of these being an M.B. waistcoat, a garment presumably not rich in pockets—as far as the lay mind can ascertain—and none of them an overcoat, there were few hiding-places in which a stout morocco letter-case might be secreted. And in that lost letter-case, he was beyond all doubt convinced, he had placed the munificent gift of the Marquis of Carabas.

No one likes to lose fifty pounds, particularly if he can afford it ; to the average male Briton with red fighting blood in his veins, the sensation of being got the better of by robbers or otherwise is objectionable, but, to the rector of Freshford there was the further annoyance of having suspicion thrown on his household or his flock, and in particular on one already black sheep of the latter. He was, therefore, made wretched by the loss, and was to become more so.

"Now, George," said his cousin, after busy and patient discussion of the matter at the fireside, "you met the Marquis at the club, and there commanded him to stand and deliver. In what room?"

"In the reading room."

"Who else was present?"

"Oh! let me see ; some farmer fellow, I think. No ; they'd all gone out by the time the Marquis came to the point."

"Was brought to bay, you mean. So you had no witnesses? Now, on receiving the notes, what did you do?"

"Well! I thanked him ; that seemed the best thing to do."

"You'd better be careful, or you'll be committed for contempt of court. What did you do with the

notes on making the Marquis disgorge them?"

"Folded them in the pocket of the case after taking the numbers in the note ; then put the case in my pocket-book. They were tucked up in a bit of the sermon."

"Futile sermon, I fear! Did the Marquis see this done?"

"Probably not. He'd put on his glasses and was looking out of the window at the Screwby girls driving by."

"M' lud, this witness is incorrigible. Which left the apartment first ; you or the Marquis?"

"As if I didn't know better than to precede a peer of the realm. Besides, age goes before honesty."

"This is irrelevant ; confine yourself to facts. Now, are you quite sure you didn't slip the case outside your pocket instead of inside?"

"Dead sure. But I'll make enquiries at the club."

"Auntie—I mean m' lud—this is a point. The club ought to be put in the witness box. Now, Mr. Burroughes, did you go to any other part of the club—smoking-room? Of course. The case might be dropped there. And, on leaving the club, you walked down the High Street and called at the library. Good. And then you went to the Honeybuns'. Oh, George! and Honeybun only just out of gaol! Nowhere else?"

"Nowhere. I came straight home, calling on the Rays, as you know, on my way. It is utterly impossible that I could have dropped anything from the pocket."

"That will do, witness. M' lud—that is, Aunt Carrie—this is the case for the prosecution. It must have been done at Honeybun's. You see it lies between them and the servants."

"I wish it did, then I'd pick it up," said George. "Well! I can't do anything till Monday now, that's clear."

"An evening spoilt," commented Maud, stifling a yawn, as she rose to go to bed, "by three little bits of paper."

*(To be continued.)*



## THINGS IN GENERAL.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

WHAT an advantage it is in the face of a coal strike and all the other miseries involved in it, that this wonderful sunshine of 1893, which began to be so warm and bright before anybody expected it, and has continued so much longer than any one hoped, should still be shining on over the trees which make our parks and fields one continuous flower garden, through October as through March, beneficent, warming one's very heart. The trees, in all their red and yellow liveries, stand up in it with an answering glow. The banks of fallen leaves below shine red and warm, with little of that suggestion of downfall and decay which chills the sentiment of autumn—a sun so warm, so generous, so serene, wins everything to his own joyous temper. The charm of the Riviera has come to us here in the North—with this additional glory that our forest trees are more varied, more noble, in their great height and strength than the olives and pines of that enchanted coast. Not a word have I to say in disparagement of the olives which give such softness to the southern landscape, and harmonize all its higher lights; but the great elms, still dark, with the tinge of yellow here and there, the oaks and beeches glowing red, the birches giving forth a golden tone, shine in a radiance of their own, more individual and particular. I have never liked much Lord Tennyson's "fiery finger" of autumn, for it is not fiery, but icy, though it burns—and the contradiction gives an uneasy sense as of a false metaphor; but the noonday glow of this marvellous season suggests no chill, no

decadence, but only a more dazzling kind of life.

It is a grand way of neutralising for the moment the miseries of the coal-strike, heaven itself coming in, as we might say, to stave off the trouble: but yet the country in general, as well as myriads of toiling people, must be much the worse for it if it goes on.

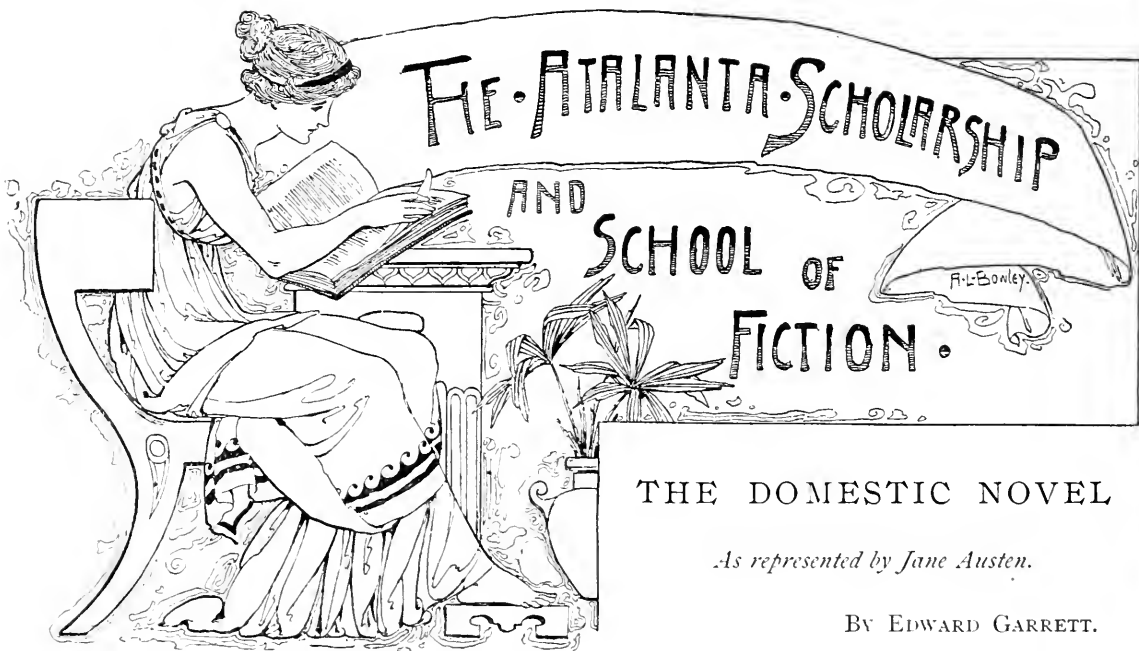
It would be a curious study for one who is just beginning to think upon great subjects to endeavour to disentangle this question about the strike, and get at the rights of it. The very fundamental facts of all seem to be left in the completest uncertainty, though nothing, surely, could be easier than to make them plain. On one side it is said that the colliers have had nearly two pounds a week, which is comfort and competence—on the other, that they have had about sixteen shillings, which is penury and starvation. And no one can say that this or that is absolutely true. We believe one or other estimate according to our prepossessions, according to the side we take: and not all the exertions of all the newspapers, with their "unrivalled means," as people say, of obtaining information, can establish a certainty anywhere. If we cannot make sure of an external fact like this, how are we to make sure of the more fundamental matters, of justice, of reason, of what is right and what is wrong? Should one side take all the risk, and another all the profit?—and if so, which side? Sentiment says that it should be the masters, who are few comparatively, who are rich, who might lose a great deal, but would not starve, even if they were

ruined. But then that would not be justice, nor would it be reason: for if they were ruined they could no longer employ and pay the men, which leads us back in a circle to the point from which we started. Strange and terrible to say, it would be better economy if, as in times when the rule of the strong hand prevailed, it was the men who suffered, even to the point of partial starvation, while the money to pay and the head to direct remained intact; but this would not be justice, though it might, in a painful sense, be reason. How, then, is the balance to be maintained? It is a question beyond my power, but it is one well worth thinking about. It involves a great many other questions, as everybody can see. If the community hung together and every man considered his neighbour's welfare as his own, how should a collier reconcile himself to the fact that his strike, on a question quite individual to himself, should throw his brother, the worker in iron, out of work, and pinch his cousins who have done him no wrong, yet whose fire must burn low because he is dissatisfied with his wages? We do all hang together, whether we realize it or not, and one member cannot be injured or go wrong, without the others feeling it. If we only knew, to begin with, which story was true! Are the colliers paid very well, and able to bear a little reduction, as all the rest of us are forced to bear reductions when times are bad? or are they paid very badly at all times, so that reduction means starvation?

This subject, of labour and wages, however, is likely to be one of the most absorbing of our time, and it would be an excellent exercise for the young thinker to work it out in his or her young mind, before being brought face to face with it practically, as may occur in after life. There are, of course, handbooks on political economy, notably one by Mrs. Fawcett, which would guide them in that science; but I love individual thought, and there is no reason why the rules of common sense might not guide us in such a matter. The young people who, as I see in the other pages of this magazine, are not puzzled by the most recondite quotations, but give chapter and verse in a manner which fills me, a veteran reader, with awe and admiration, should not be cast down by any

practical subject proposed to them for their own individual consideration and thought.

It puzzles me to know, however, what these young people who know so much, and who even indulge their fancy in writing stories of their own, should do with the pretty little books which are sent to be noticed in these columns. Here is the "Pansy Series," for example, very pretty small volumes, gaily got up, with little pictures inside and little bouquets without. For whom are these pretty booklets written? If I may judge from the specimens before me, they are chiefly occupied by the adventures of young ladies, generally orphans, who arrive in a family of relations with whom they have no previous acquaintance, either to convert or to be converted. In *Musgrove Ranch* the former case is the one treated. Ada Selwyn, suddenly left alone by the death of her father, comes to the Californian ranch of her cousins, the Musgroves, opulent, genial, clever people who, however, never go to church, and are ostentatiously indifferent to all religious influence. That she changes the tone of the house completely by her feminine gentleness and religious courage, it is needless to say. In *Ida Cameron*, the process is reversed; it is the orphan visitor who is the naughty young person, entirely changed and converted into the most perfect of angelic ministrants by the virtue of the family who, indeed, with the exception of Aunt Jean, are too good to live. For whom are these little books written? Not, I imagine, for the girls who compete for the reading prizes, or who compose the sketches in fiction which are appended to this magazine. I am myself disposed to object to too much literature for the young. An English-speaking boy or girl—to whatever nation of that race they may belong—has the finest inheritance in literature that ever was—they have only to step in and take possession. But when one hears of the boys and girls who cannot read Scott, who consider Ivanhoe something of the nature of Mayne Reid, and who gape over even Dickens, one feels disposed to think that the race must be tumbling into ruin altogether. I hope it is not so—but it is, perhaps, due a little to the children's books, which train them in so many cases into inanity, or the young lady books, which are worse.



## THE DOMESTIC NOVEL

*As represented by Jane Austen.*

BY EDWARD GARRETT.

JANE AUSTEN has never been a widely "popular" author. In her own day, her work made neither fame nor profit, though it was speedily appreciated by such judges as Walter Scott, Southey, Coleridge, Archbishop Whately, and Lord Macaulay. The latter, be it noted, set her down as second in rank only to Shakespeare. Her fame has this true test of genuineness, that it has been slow of growth, and that it is still growing. It may be interesting to study the secret of her strength and excellence.

We must first consider what she was in herself. She was a young woman of the upper class, in circumstances of easy affluence. She never married, but there is no streak of real tragedy or romance visible in the scanty materials of her biography. Her strongest personal attachment seems to have been to her elder sister Cassandra, and one traces this sisterly affection in the attachment between her "Elizabeth" and "Jane Bennett," her "Elinor and Marianne Dashwood," even in the bond which so readily forms between "Fanny Price" and her sister. Nearly all Jane Austen's known correspondence is what passed between herself and this beloved Cassandra during their brief separations. These letters reveal the life in which she lived—a life of happy household affection, petty neighbourly interests, and the "genteel" diversions of the day, balls, routs,

and country-house visiting. It is often hard to believe that her letters are not chapters from her novels! One can scarcely tell whether she is writing about the movements of her living acquaintances or of her "characters."

Letters and novels alike display fine insight into character, and a humorous perception of its intricacies. We may note that in her letters, Jane Austen occasionally allows herself a more cynical tone than she would put directly into the mouths of her own favourite heroines. This flavour of cynicism, though it certainly appears in the novels, is created there rather by the skilful way in which the characters are played off one upon another, or by the wonderful little sentences, so few and far between, wherein the authoress herself plays the part of the Greek chorus, and also occasionally by the utterances of characters not on the heroine-level. Thus in "Mansfield Park" it is not Fanny Price, but Mary Crawford, who says, "We seemed very glad to see each other, and I do really think we were a little!"—a sentence which might have come out of one of Miss Austen's own letters, abounding as they do in such remarks as, "We have been very gay since I wrote last; dining at Nackington, returning by moonlight, and everything quite in style, not to mention Mr. Claringbould's funeral, which we saw go by on Sunday:" or, again, "I rather wish the Lefroys may have the curacy. It

would be an amusement to Mary to superintend their household management, and abuse them for expense, especially as Mrs. L. — means to advise them to put their washing out;" or, once more, "Fanny Austen's match is quite news, and I am sorry she has behaved so ill. There is some comfort to us in her misconduct, that we have not a congratulatory letter to write."

The first thing that strikes us about Jane Austen is that she (in this particular like the otherwise widely dissimilar Tolstoi of our own time) wrote only of what she really knew. Her scenes are laid in the country towns and watering places and London visits, which made the surroundings of her own life. Her characters are chosen from the country gentry, and the clerical, naval, and military circles in which she was familiar. On the margin are one or two "city people," or yeoman farmers like poor Robert Martin in "Emma." Her little section of the world is sharply focussed in her pages (as in her letters). The rest remains in the outer darkness, as if it did not exist. There may be 'poor' without individuality, who are 'visited,' and who receive doles of tea, sugar, and flannel, or who bully young ladies in country lanes, as when Churchill overtakes Harriet on the Richmond Road. The 'church' is regarded as a conveniently profitable and genteel calling for younger sons of the steadier sort. Henry Tilney, Edmund Bertram, and Edward Ferrars, are all clergymen. They dance, hunt, and flirt as if these made the whole of life. Edmund is in love, in a way, with Mary Crawford and Fanny Price, both at once. Edward Ferrars is in love with Elinor Dashwood while he is engaged to Lucy Steele. When he gets a living, the items concerning it which are summed up as worthy of interest, are the state of the house, garden and glebe, extent of the parish, condition of the land and rate of the tithes! Jane Austen, in her own person, had no view of ministerial duty which could prevent her from describing its discharge by the coined verb, "to clerge!" She lived and wrote in stirring times. The Napoleonic wars were going on, Nelson conquered and died, the slave trade was abolished, the war of American Independence separated the United States from Great Britain, the battle of Waterloo was fought. But no trace of any influence from these events is to be found in

her books (save that some of the families are a little disturbed in their West Indian properties, or some of the naval or military youths obtain promotion), nor yet in Jane's own letters, except by such slight references as to Southey's "Life of Nelson." "I am tired of Lives of Nelson, being that I never read any. I will read this, however, if Frank is mentioned in it." ("Frank" being her brother.) There are some pretty but very slight vignettes of English scenery in the stories. No animals cross their pages, save horses for riding or driving. Nor do we find any "pets" mentioned in her letters.

All of Jane Austen's stories end "happily." That is to say, all "entanglements" are cleared away, financial arrangements drop into right condition, and the heroine gets married to the hero—and all this in a fashion quite inconsistent with the sternly truthful tone of the preceding story. We know that no such endings are true to real life, where the right people will often go on and marry the wrong ones, and where character persists in spite of matrimony! All this was but Jane Austen's concession to convention, and was, perhaps, made the more easily because no iron ever seems to have entered into her soul, to impress her with life's deeper problems and perplexities!

What we have hitherto said only serves to show that Jane Austen put on her canvas but a small section of the world's life, and that to most eyes a common-place and uninteresting section. She was entirely and frankly limited by the social customs, conventions, and ways of life and thought around her, so that her pictures of these are already of almost antiquarian interest. Yet her fame is growing! In what, then, does her greatness consist?

It consists in her insight into human character. Her range of human life might be small, but her knowledge of human nature was boundless. She likened her own work to miniature painting "with so fine a brush as produces little effect after so much labour." But then each miniature is a matchless portrait, and as we know, it takes greater skill to bring out individuality in such a delicate and tiny scale, especially when, to coarser visions, there might seem a general resemblance in the faces of the subjects, even as in their garb! It is comparatively easy to draw angels, because, as nobody

has seen one, the likeness cannot be questioned, or monsters, because if one has not seen the like, he still cannot absolutely deny that they may exist. Take for instance, Dickens' "Quilp." I remember once, many years ago, venturing to suggest that he was an exaggeration, when a lady in the company silenced me by the remark that she knew such a man—he had been her own husband! But even that singular testimonial to reality cannot give "Quilp" more than a purely pathological value. He is in the scheme of human life only as are "the Siamese twins," or "the living skeleton." There are no "Quilps" among Jane Austen's characters. We have all known every one of them—which simply means that we have all known some of the faces which go to make up the wonderful "composite" with which she presents us.

We are not to confound this marvellous faculty of true presentation, with mere observation, or with what is called "drawing from the life." These are part of it, but it is more than these. Observation is worth very little unless we know what to observe, and how to co-relate our observations. And when all that can be said of any character-drawing is that it is "a study from the life" it has probably seized only the accidental and not the essential, and is apt to be as valueless as those awful amateur photographs, which "must be like, you know," but which simply cannot be identified by the uninitiated!

Observation is of slight value, unless it accompanies such a grasp of character as will enable the portrayer not merely to depict words and actions which have been heard and seen, but also to predicate words which would be spoken and the line of conduct which would be pursued by the subject of the portraiture on any given occasion or under any imaginable pressure. As it was said that if a bone was given to Sir Richard Owen, he could construct the animal to which it belonged, so a phrase or an action becomes to the seeing eye, the revelation of a whole character—the prophecy of a complete history.

It is almost impossible to point out special instances of Jane Austen's faculty in this wise, because her books are simply compact with them. If, in explanation of what we have said, we indicate a few scenes for our readers' special consideration, it is not that they excel thousands of others, but simply that they suffice to serve our purpose.

Take the wonderfully drawn characters of "Mr. and Mrs. John Dashwood" in "Sense and Sensibility." It is little likely indeed that Jane Austen had ever heard such a dialogue as she reports in Chapter II. But she had observed the tendency of human nature to minimize its "good intentions" when brought to the point of fulfilment, and to yield to influences which sway it in the direction of its own worst tendencies. And again, in Chapter XVII., how pithily the few remarks between Elinor and Marianne concerning "competence" and "wealth," set forth the perpetual trap into which plain people fall if they do not carefully insist that their gushing controverters shall explain their terms!

The Steele girls are life-like presentments of inbred vulgarity. In "Northanger Abbey," how the shallowness—entailing falseness—of Isabella Thorpe's character is revealed by dainty touches in the conversation between her and Catherine in Chapter VI., and again where they meet at the theatre. How inimitable is that young lady's championship of "Miss Andrews." "The men think us incapable of real friendship, you know: and I am determined to show them the difference... You have so much animation, which is exactly what Miss Andrews wants; for I must confess there is something amazingly insipid about her." How John Thorpe makes himself known to us, uttering contradictory commonplaces with conceited dogmatism, and shining especially as a literary critic! And how consonant with this introduction is the part he plays in the story, whose very simple plot hinges on his wild assertions and retractions!

"Pride and Prejudice" is one of the best of Jane Austen's novels. Elizabeth Bennett, with her quiet good sense, is a delightful heroine, with Jane for a pleasant second, and the other Bennett girls for foils. The mother's "extraordinary ordinariness" often rises to sublimity!—as, when eagerly pressing forward the marriage of her runaway Lydia, she pauses in all her agitation, to think of Lydia's clothes and to reflect that Lydia does not know the best warehouses!

Mr. Collins, the young clergyman, is made to show himself exactly as he is, unctuous, pragmatic, and underbred, and this without any suspicion of caricature! His enjoyment of Lady Catherine's offensive patronage, as set forth in Chapter XIV., is delightfully realistic, as is his proposal to Elizabeth



in Chapter XIX., and his sententious and selfish moralities throughout. Quiet, cool Mr. Bennett, who is aware he has married a fool, and that against stupidity even the gods fight in vain, is very skillfully depicted. The studied rudeness of a fine lady is well brought out when Lady Catherine first appears in Chapter XXIX., and critics particularly admire Chapter LVI.,—calling the scene between Lady Catherine and Elizabeth “delicious and inimitable.”

There is much exquisite character-drawing in “Mansfield Park.” Every scene in which Mrs. Norris appears is worthy of careful study. More vividly than any sermon could, does the episode of the private theatricals show the force of frivolity and persistence in wearing away better principles. The three sisters, Lady Bertram, Mrs. Norris, and Mrs. Price, all equally self-engrossed, though in such different fashion, are very well brought out. Fanny Price herself, with all her sweetness and docility, has plenty of sense and spirit, which evidently develop in the suffering caused by Edmund’s devotion to Miss Crawford, and which we cannot help half hoping may some day prove the Nemesis of that infatuation!

“Emma” seems to us the least attractive of Miss Austen’s books. Emma herself is a charming study, but only because she is so naïvely conceited, so frankly puffed up with her own wisdom! She can be so unkind to poor Miss Bates, so unjust to worthy Robert Martin. Her father, so kindly a gentleman, in all his valetudinarianism, is a delicate triumph of skill. Miss Bates herself is a delightful compound of sweetness of nature, muddle-headedness, and volubility.

“Persuasion” has a great charm. It was Jane Austen’s last book. Her own youth had passed away, she was in the trying days of early middle life, the very hand of death was upon her, when she wrote it. Anne, gentle, refined Anne, is described in two words “only Anne,”—that is all she is to those for whom she had sacrificed her love and surrendered her will. “She had been forced into prudence in her youth, she learned romance as she

grew older,” and such a nature and history is well set off between her two sisters, the hard and haughty spinster and the selfish, narrow-minded young married woman, living in perpetual friction with her mother-in-law. Chapter X. is full of pathos, only deepened by the severe reserve of its expression. It makes us feel as tired as Anne herself—the tiredness of a sad heart. Very subtle is Anne’s secret reflection, in the following chapter, that the much-pitied Captain Benwick “has not a more sorrowing heart than I have; I cannot believe his prospects so blighted for ever. He is younger than I am, younger in feeling; younger as a man.” And what deep reading of the human heart is in the little incident when Anne’s alienated lover, Captain Wentworth, notices a stranger’s casual admiration of her, and straightway turning to look at her, sees “something like Anne Elliott again.”

All this is observation, but it is imagination too, and that deep insight born of the sympathy which can project itself not only into others’ circumstances, but into their very natures.

Jane Austen’s knowledge of the human heart was positively uncanny for a woman so young and so fortunately placed. She was undoubtedly cynical. There are no signs of tenderness in her letters, and but few in her books. Even in “Persuasion,” she can actually raise a smile at a matron’s “fat sighs” over her worthless dead son! Yet, as Lord Brabourne says, her works “make virtue lovely and vice the reverse. . . Without ever preaching to us, they continually impress upon our minds lessons of a purifying and elevating tendency. The different motives which influence men and women in various circumstances of life—the special faults which beset certain natures; the effects those faults produce upon others . . . all these are drawn by the master hand of a great artist.”

It is worth noting that one of the last utterances Jane Austen put into the mouth of her latest and meekest heroine is an expression of belief “that a strong sense of duty is no bad part of a woman’s portion.”

## READING UNION.

I. Give an analysis of the character of Elizabeth, in "Pride and Prejudice," not to exceed 500 words.

II. Write an Original Sonnet on "Grief."

Subscribers may choose either of these subjects. Papers must always be sent in on or before the 25th of the current month.

## SEARCH QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

### I.

1. To what poem do the following lines belong?—

All the bright creatures that, like dreams,  
Glide through its foliage, and drink beams  
Of beauty from its founts and streams.

2. What superstition do they refer to?

### II.

Finish the following paragraph, and state what work it is from:—

"I was only too glad to go, after all this tempest; as you may well suppose. For, if ever I saw a man's eyes become two holes for the devil to glare from, I saw it that day; and the eyes were those of the . . ."

### III.

In what play occurs, and what characters make use of, this dialogue?—

"He is Cupid's grandfather, and learns news of him."

"Then was Venus like her mother; for her father is but grim."

### IV.

What poet earned the title:

"Nature's sternest painter, yet the best"?

### V.

1. Who is referred to in these lines?—

My grave Lord Keeper led the Brawls;  
The Seals and Maces danced before him.

2. Give names of poem and author.

### VI.

Who was the first writer of English blank verse?

### VII.

By whom and to whom is this couplet written?—

I, wearing but the garland of a day,  
Cast at thy feet one flower that fades away.

### VIII.

In what poem occurs this couplet?—

Had Reason ruled him in her proper place  
And Virtue led him, while he lean'd on Grace—

## ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (OCTOBER).

### I.

Middle. Théroigne (Carlyle's French Revolution).

### II.

1. Lord Byron. 2. During a fever in the Morca, 1820, when Romanelli was the physician who attended him. Fortunately the epitaph was premature.

### III.

1. To the fog that covered both Europe and Asia during the whole summer of 1783.

2. Cowper. *The Task*, book 2.

### IV.

1. Leigh Hunt. 2. Samuel Rogers. 3. Thackeray's step-father, Major Carmichael Smyth; and Captain Light, a poor brother of Charterhouse.

### V.

1. Castle of Indolence. 2. *Archimago*, Chief magician. *Benemf*, named.

### VI.

1. It symbolises the undying struggle of the soul against the dark powers of tyranny and wrong, towards the everlasting dawn of a perfect peace that shall have its foundation in Man's inherent goodness. 2. While to Shelley, Prometheus was the embodiment of Man and his intellectual evolution, to the Greek poet he was but a Titan endowed with an indomitable purpose and the gift of foresight. The former achieves the final victory through suffering, while the old dramatist concludes with an inglorious compromise.

### VII.

1. Burns was born on the 25th January, 1759, the year before George II. died. 2. *Rantin' Robin*. 3. A beggar woman, to whom Burns's father had rendered some slight assistance, uttered a prophecy over the newly-born poet which was afterwards fulfilled.

### VIII.

1. Thomson and Mallet. 2. The Masque of "Alfred."





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Luke Fildes, R.A.

# THE VENETIANS.

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### A Song of Silence.

I love you so  
That I am silent when I feel you near,  
Lest by my voice my love I should betray ;  
Like a dumb lute that seals its lips for fear  
Of the sweet wind that draws its soul away,  
I hush my voice, fearing your touch that wakes  
The mournful music of the heart it breaks.  
Let me be still, I must not let you know  
I love you so.

I may not tell  
My love for you who care not. Does the rose  
Woo the sweet, careless wind that passes by?  
No. She is silent—not the softest sigh  
Betrays her pain. She never will disclose,  
Till by that wind her lips are kissed apart,  
The sad, sweet secret locked within her heart.  
And I am mute beneath the same pure spell.  
Alas! my love, because I am a rose,

I may not tell!

BEATRICE CREGAN.



## UNCLE McSHANE.

BY MRS. ALEXANDER.

"CAN you come home in tolerably good time to-day, Mr. Brooke?" asked the wife of his bosom, one fine morning, as the family were assembled round the well-spread breakfast-table, in that admirably-appointed, well-kept mansion, Alma Lodge, St. John's Wood. The outside blinds were already lowered, for the sun poured its early beams into the dining-room, and the perfume of mignonette and sweet-pea came in through the open window.

"What do you call 'good time?'" returned Mr. Brooke, without raising his eyes from the *Times*, which he held in one hand, while he stirred his tea with the other. He was a pepper-and-salt coloured man, from his greyish red hair to his well-blackened shoes and white gaiters; tall, and well-preserved, with cold, light blue eyes, and careful attire.

"Oh, four or half-past. I am going to call on Sir Andrew and Lady Ingot, and as it is a first visit, I should like you to come with me."

"Before you make any arrangement of that kind, you ought to ascertain if my uncle requires the carriage," said Mr. Brooke, in a precise tone. A slight contraction passed across Mrs. Brooke's face. Placidity usually reigned over her "tip-tilted nose," expansive cheeks, and smiling, but exceedingly observant dark eyes. The cloud was scarcely perceptible, however, and, turning to a gentleman who sat on her right, she exclaimed pleasantly, "Oh, yes! of course! I can take you anywhere you like first, Mr. McShane."

This gentleman might be about the age of her husband, or older. He was short and thin, with a queer, crumpled little face, a sort of one-sided, up-turned pose of the head, and that squeeze of the brows peasants often acquire from looking at the sun with unshaded optics. He had a wide, down-curved mouth, and a shaggy pair of brows, under which his keen, dark eyes gleamed or melted—his aspect being expressive of fun, mixed with quaint pathos.

"Sure, you're too good entirely, Mrs. Brooke, ma'am. I'd be sorry to interfere with your plans.

I can take a tuppenny 'bus any time, to go any way, and, bedad, I have nowhere to go now-a-days. Don't let me interfere with you, by no manner of means" (he said "manes").

"Oh! if the carriage is going a-begging, I will put in my claim," said an abundant-looking young lady who sat opposite him, and who appeared to have been melted and poured into her admirably cut, elaborately embroidered Holland morning frock, which seemed brimming over with its contents. She was high-coloured, with a very fair skin, quantities of carrot red hair, and a large crop of freckles. This was Mrs. Brooke's daughter by her first marriage, Miss Sarah Jane Smally. "Moreover, I have a vested right to my share in it!" she continued.

"Then, if uncle doesn't really want it, will you come back in time to accompany me?" said Mrs. Brooke, addressing her husband.

"Yes, if I can. Don't wait after five o'clock. By the way, here's a note from Val. Can you give him a bed? He has a few days' leave, and wants to discuss some business matters with me."

"Oh yes, I can manage it. It would be better if he could wait till I send May and Kitty Graeme to the seaside. But we shall manage."

"Sure, I'm just taking up the house-room of the family," exclaimed Uncle McShane, earnestly. "Why don't you let me go and take a room—I mean apartments—as I wanted long ago, though your hospitable heart wouldn't let me! I could find some quite handy, and——"

"Ah! Uncle McShane," interrupted Sarah Jane, "you know you ought to take a real handsome place—there's Aubrey House, that's the very thing—and give a big ball for *me*. I'll ask the company, and you shall pay the bill."

"Faith, I wouldn't desire better! and welcome you'd be; but, though the heart is willing, the purse is light, me dear young lady. I wish you'd believe me, I'm no millionaire."

"None of your nonsense, uncle. You like to keep fast hold of the cash. But, ma dear, can't you double up Kitty and Mrs. Thompson,

and give her room to Val? I know he wants to come, and I want him."

"Well, he doesn't want you, Sally," said her half-brother Sam, a truculent urchin of twelve, who was busy stowing away as much breakfast as he could in the limited time before starting for school. "You worried him to death the last time he was here. I wonder he comes any more."

"You are a rude, impertinent cub," cried Sarah Jane, angrily.

"Oh, fie for shame, Sammy, to speak that way to a lady," said Uncle McShane.

"Ladies! Why not? They can be great nuisances."

"Samuel, be silent!" said his father, sternly. "There is Val's letter," he continued, passing it down to his wife, "he seems to be coming up to-day."

"Very well," said Mrs. Brooke.

"An elegant young man, and the height of good company," murmured Uncle McShane. "Faith, any father might be proud of him;" he pointed his words with a nod towards his host.

"Rather a costly article," replied Mr. Brooke, rising and offering the paper to his uncle.

"Well, isn't he worth the cost?" asked Sarah Jane. "I don't know that you would get better value anywhere."

"Faith, that's well said, my dear young lady. It's pleasant to see a purty girl stand up for a boy that's only her half-brother."

"Not even that, Uncle McShane," cried Sarah Jane, with a deep blush. "Val happens to be my mother's husband's son. He is no relation to me."

Mr. Brooke folded up his napkin precisely, and wished the party good morning.

There was a moment's silence. Then Uncle McShane rose and handed the paper to Mrs. Brooke. "Maybe you'd like to see the news. I'm just going into the garden to say good morning to May and her guardian angel. I suppose they are out by this time."

He rose and brushed the crumbs from the waistcoat of his accurate grey morning suit; rose from the table, patted a shrewd-looking fox terrier, who fawned upon him, and left the room, followed by Sam and Elizabeth—a long-legged, awkward girl of thirteen or fourteen, the eldest of Mrs. Brooke's second family.

"Well!" exclaimed Sarah Jane, as soon as she

was *tête-à-tête* with her mother, "of all the old softies I ever came across, Uncle McShane is the softest! Do you know what he slinks off for every morning as soon as Mr. Brooke is gone?"

"How can I tell?"

"To read fairy tales to May! and if you heard him, what with his brogue and his queer pronunciation, it would make a cat laugh."

"He is very kind to poor May," said Mrs. Brooke, with a sigh. May, her youngest, was a little, crippled weakling, for whose future there was little hope, and Kitty was her attendant—a second cousin, whom Mrs. Brooke had taken for an unpaid attaché, as the cheapest way of providing for a pauper relation.

"Oh yes, kind enough, but I say, ma, he can keep his money tight enough. There is such a lot of humbug in people, now ain't there?"

"Oh, I don't know. I have too much to think of. Here is Val coming unexpectedly, and, as he wants to speak to your father, I am certain he is in a scrape."

"Poor Val! It's his misfortune; he was born with a princely nature. Show me his note, ma."

Mrs. Brooke threw it across the table.

"If he is in any money trouble, he can soon get clear of it," continued the young lady, her eyes on the paper, "if he had only the courage to ask."

"Sarah Jane, you're a fool!" said her mother, emphatically.

"Perhaps I am, perhaps I am not. Anyhow, I know what I want. I rather fancy I'll get it."

"If I were you, I'd be ashamed to hanker after a man that doesn't want me."

"How do you know he doesn't? I am not the sort of woman men are indifferent to! Val and I understand each other. All he wants is encouragement. Mind, ma, whether he is in debt or out of it, he is the man I fancy. I never met anyone to match him."

Sarah Jane was both bright and busy the rest of the day. She put the flowers on the dinner table herself, much to the disgust of the tasteful parlourmaid. "She always makes a 'hobject' of the decorations," observed the aggrieved damsel. She gathered some flowers for her own hair, and then she made a ponderous "buttonhole," and placed it on "the shrine," *i.e.*, the dressing table of the admired Val. That gentleman was somewhat late,

and dressed with reckless rapidity, so not unnaturally omitted the "posy" provided for him. This did not prevent Sarah Jane regarding him with tender pride. She gazed delightedly at his well-set-up, well-proportioned figure, his sun-embrowned countenance, and short, curly, dark hair, his somewhat impatient, handsome hazel eyes, and the white teeth which showed under his thick moustaches when he smiled. But he did not smile much on the present occasion. The good-looking young captain was not in a good temper, evidently, and did not speak much to anyone, except Uncle McShane, with whom he generally exchanged jokes and good stories, which were something of an unknown tongue to the rest of the company.

"Have you renounced buttonholes?" asked Sarah Jane, with a languishing glance.

"Yes—no! Oh! I had something else to think of to-day," he said, carelessly.

"You might have put it in when it was provided for you."

"Ah, indeed! Did *you* put that posy on my table? Very good, I'm sure. Don't waste your time on such an unlucky fellow as myself."

"Do you think I should mind your ill-luck?"

"Can't say. Don't fancy you would care for a failure. What, going? Well, I want to talk to my father. See you presently."

"And if he proves obstinate?"

"What do you mean?" interrupted Val. "What should he be obstinate about?"

"I'm sure I don't know," returned Sarah Jane, a little awed by his stern tone.

"I suppose May and Kitty have gone off to the seaside," said Val, as he held the door open for his stepmother to pass through.

"No, not yet! They are upstairs as usual; May hates coming into the drawing-room more than ever."

"I don't suppose Kitty objects to society, though."

"Kitty's business is to attend to May," returned Mrs. Brooke, shortly.

"You may trust Kitty to take care of herself," added Sarah Jane, with a mocking laugh, as she followed her mother across the hall—and Val closed the door, not too gently.

Arrived in the drawing-room, Mrs. Brooke sat down and looked at her daughter.

"There will be a row," she said, solemnly.

"I fancy he is in a scrape; he looks awfully glum!" replied that young lady.

"Yes, Sarah Jane, I hope you see what a horrid temper he has! Mr. Brooke has always been too indulgent to him!"

"Well, *you* have nearly cured him of that weakness."

"Don't be so disagreeable, Sarah Jane!"

"All right, \*\*I'll bestow my disagreeability on May—or Kitty—May will be in bed."

An uncomfortable hour and more passed while Mrs. Brooke waited and worked at a huge piece of crochet. At last she heard the dining-room door open, then the front door, and finally the outer gate was slammed vigorously. Almost immediately, her husband came in, looking as if all the blood in his veins had turned to vinegar.

"Careless, reckless, unprincipled young jack-anapes!" he exclaimed, and proceeded to detail Val's enormities. He had got into debt, he had ridden races and bet heavily, hoping to retrieve one disaster by risking another; at last the money-lenders threatened summary proceedings, and Val was driven to ask help from his father, the bitterest pill he had yet attempted to swallow. "It is the accursed Irish strain in him," continued Mr. Brooke. "Not an ounce of practical sense about him; would go into the army, which is mere showy beggary. I must say there was no nonsense of that kind about his poor mother."

"And *I* must say he would have ruined you years ago, if it had not been for me," said Mrs. Brooke, loftily.

"And he is such an obstinate, fanciful simpleton, he won't take the way that is under his nose to get out of his difficulties."

"You mean that he might marry my dear daughter, and pay his debts with her money. I beg to say that I shall set my face against—"

Here the door opened to admit Uncle McShane, who, on these fine summer evenings, usually retired into the privacy of his own chamber or the garden, to commit the enormity of smoking a pipe, and was usually absent a considerable time, being suspected by Sarah Jane of paying evening visits to May, as a murmur of voices mingled with laughter was often heard from the school-room, where the poor little deformed girl was rather strictly kept out of sight.

At the entrance of his uncle—as McShane was



by marriage—Brooke composed himself, and then, on second thoughts, imparted the sad tale of his prodigal son's misdoings to the wealthy relative whose favour he begrudged to his first-born, so completely had his younger children pushed Val from his place. Uncle McShane listened with profound sympathy, and then, prefacing his pleadings with a violent "hm," began. "Faith, it's a cruel, hard case for him *and* for you. I don't mean to say that the young man isn't in fault, for he is; but just think of the foolishness and ignorance of youth! Didn't he hope to make it all right, as many another boy has done before him. Don't be too hard on him, Mr. Brooke, give him a chance. He's the making of a fine man and a good man, and a son you'll be proud of. What's a paltry two thousand against his whole future; you help him <sup>his</sup> once. I'd do it *meeself*, only just now I am in a tight place; but I'll not forget you by-and-by if you give in to me in this." There was infinite entreaty in his tones; but if Mr. Brooke was less obdurate in his aspect—when, after a pause, he made answer—it was because there was something in Uncle McShane's voice and manner which woke dark doubts of the reality of that relative's wealth.

"You are too partial to Val," he said. "If I yield in this instance, I lay myself open to being perpetually drained."

"Faith, you needn't. Won't this wise woman of a wife of yours close the flood gates any time you like?"

Mrs. Brooke looked up and said, with dignity, "I trust I shall do my duty."

Uncle McShane murmured something in an undertone which, but for her unfamiliarity with vulgar Irish phrases, would have given her a shock.

"Where's the poor boy?" resumed McShane.

"Oh, I don't know! He went off at a tangent to some of his worthless companions, after talking some nonsense about quitting the army and getting a money consideration from his brother officers for clearing out of the way."

"Oh, faith, that will never do at all, at all. I'll sit up for him, Mrs. Brooke, ma'am, if you have no objection; you may trust me to lock up hard and fast—maybe Val will hear reason from me."

"Heaven knows in what condition he may return," ejaculated Mrs. Brooke.

"I'd lay long odds he'll return like a sober gentleman," ejaculated Uncle McShane.

Mr. Brooke murmured something about hope less spendthrifts, and left the room. His wife folded up her piece of work, and, rising, observed, "Well, Mr. McShane, I will send the servants to bed, and trust you to lock up the gate and the front door, and will you please see that that wretched young man goes to bed without setting the house on fire?"

In a few minutes silence prevailed throughout Alma Lodge, and after pouring himself out a very modest allowance of whiskey and water, Uncle McShane proceeded to sip it slowly while he sat in profound meditation. Ultimately he drew out his memorandum book, took the pencil, and on the envelope of a letter began to scribble calculations, sucking his pencil frequently. Uncle McShane had begun to nod over this mental exercise, when he heard the latch of the gate lifted, and hurried briskly to open the door for the prodigal son.

"Sitting up for me?" exclaimed Val, "it's deuced kind of you. I rather dreaded coming in."

"Ah! where have you been, you unfortunate boy?" asked Uncle McShane, with a severe aspect, and looking at him keenly.

"Walking to and fro to recover my equanimity. No, I have not tasted even a glass of water," he added, answering the question in his grand-uncle's eyes.

"Then come in, and I'll give you the best of good advice, and, mark ye, Val, me poor fellow, it's all I have to give ye."

"Never mind, a word in season is worth a lot, and a friendly word——" the young man broke off abruptly.

"Sit down," said his uncle. "Faith, you are the livin' image of your poor mother! and she was more like a sister than a niece to me in the old times, when we were all poor enough in this wilderness of a city, before I went away to Canada," and the curiously contrasted couple fell into serious talk which lasted far into the night.

The next morning's breakfast was earlier than usual, for Mrs. Brooke and Sarah Jane had planned to make an expedition to Richmond to lunch with an old maiden aunt of the latter, who lived alone in a beautiful villa, and was the object of much attention from both mother and daughter. On this occasion the little crippled girl May had

also been invited, so, for a wonder, her faithful Kitty was to have a holiday.

Val was not at the morning meal—the servant reported him “gone out,” having had a cup of tea and slice of bread and butter an hour before.

“’Pon my word, he thinks the house is his own,” ejaculated Mrs. Brooke.

“The cold chain of silence” hung over the breakfast-table: everyone was cross except Uncle McShane. He delivered himself of a message from Val to his father to the effect that he was returning to Aldershot, and hoped not to trouble him further, at which utterance Mr. Brooke’s countenance cleared, while he said in his heart, “The young scapegrace has been persuading his uncle to help him!”

“What,” cried Sarah Jane, “won’t he come back for his traps?”

“No,” said McShane, “I have promised to send them after him.”

“I don’t wonder he is ashamed to see us,” said Mrs. Brooke with a sniff.

“You wait a bit,” said Uncle McShane, “he’ll pull through yet, no thanks to any one.”

“How do you mean?” asked Sarah Jane, looking eagerly at him.

“Oh, there’s many ways of getting out of trouble—maybe an elegant, kind-hearted young lady, with a neat little fortune, that he’s fond of, but afraid to speak up to, will take pity on him. The great thing is to get time.”

“The girl would be a fool to give her money to a spendthrift like Val,” cried Mrs. Brooke, growing very red. “But I have various things to arrange before we start,” she continued, rising. “Let me see you before you go to town”—this to her husband as she left the room.

“Sure,” resumed Uncle McShane, addressing Mr. Brooke, “I’ve a fellow-feeling for the poor young fellow, having been in trouble meeself. I know what it is to be in want of money.”

“Oh, come, that must be an old story.”

“No, not so very old at all,” began McShane, when the parlour-maid came in.

“Will you come, please, and speak to missis, sir?” she said, and Brooke immediately rose and followed her.

\* \* \* \*

The house was quite quiet—everyone had departed an hour or more, and Kitty Graeme had

come quietly downstairs to replace some books she had ventured to borrow from a small and somewhat gloomy apartment dignified with the appellation of “library.” The only joys of Kitty’s rather suppressed, monotonous existence were a fit of good humour on May’s part, or a new interesting book—neither came frequently; naturally the poor invalid was often fretful and trying, while the last way of expending money that suggested itself to the Brooke family, was on new books.

Kitty was a slim, willowy creature of twenty, slight, but not angular, with a long graceful throat, and a rather pale oval face, which was illuminated by a pair of large well-shaped eyes that were sometimes dark and bright, sometimes dull and light, as the spirit moved her. Her mouth was rather too wide, but then it could smile—a sweet, pathetic smile, when it displayed a row of pearly white teeth: and her small head was crowned with plenty of wavy bronze-brown hair, with glints as if of burnished metal among its meshes. She did not look bright on this particular morning, rather did her young face wear a troubled expression, though, intending to pay a visit to her only friend, she had donned her best frock—a very humble one, yet precious in her eyes. It was a lilac and white flowered muslin, with a pretty little flounce round the skirt, a wide folded black silk sash, and a narrow black lace scarf round her white throat. She was still standing in thought after having replaced the books, when one of the servants entered.

“Oh, please, Miss,” she said, in a tone of entreaty, “would you be so kind as to do the table flowers for me? There’s a lot to do, as there’s company to-night, and I’ll not have time to fix them properly—then Miss Smalley will scold.”

“Very well, Susan.”

“They are all in the dining-room—the vases and things, all of ’em, miss.”

Kitty had nearly the whole day before her, and rather liked the task, which went quickly under her deft fingers. It was nearly finished when she heard footsteps in the hall; she started, and grew very pale; the next moment the door opened and Val Brooke came in, carefully closing it behind him.

“This is luck,” he exclaimed, without offering to shake hands with her, “to find the house clear, and only you at home.”

"Yes, but I am obliged to go out immediately!"

"Not until you hear what I have to say, Kitty," he said, resolutely. "You have turned a deaf ear to me often enough; but now I am in a hole, you'll not refuse to hear the confessions of an unlucky beggar."

"I did hear you had got into a scrape, and if I could help you the least bit, I would listen with all my heart, Val—Mr. Brooke, I mean."

"No, you don't mean anything but Val. You think of me as Val—if you ever do—and you are awfully ungrateful if you don't. You know you haunt *me*. Look here, Kitty, you have been rude, and unkind, and everything you ought not to be, and yet I can't get you out of my head or my heart."

"Mr. Brooke, you know you must not, and ought not, to speak such words to me! They are weakness and folly on your part; it would be disloyalty on mine to listen. I was angry long ago, when I fancied you were merely amusing yourself; now I am grieved and distressed: it would be ruin for you to think of me seriously; it would separate you from your father, and you are dependent on him. What could I do to help you? No, don't, Val, my hands are all wet!"

He turned away and began to pace the room, while Kitty put the refuse of the flowers together on the tray and dried her long, white fingers, which Sarah Jane envied in her secret heart; she was very pale and troubled, in spite of keeping a steady front. "Besides, Val, you know I would not marry you unless you were quite rich and independent. I am very mercenary, I intend to be mercenary, so——"

"Kitty," said Val, sternly, and pausing opposite her, "how dare you tell such audacious falsehoods? You are as true as steel; as free from self-seeking as an angel; and—why, sweet one, you are white and trembling! You are *not* indifferent to me—you can't be, to the only one in the house who loves and values you. We are both outcasts now, let us make common cause. I am going to leave the army; needs must; and I am going to leave all fineries behind me. That dear old fellow, Uncle McShane, is going to help me to some colonising scheme—and Kitty, will you refuse to share the hardships as well as the luxuries of life with me? Not the worst hardships, though: I'll make a home for you before I ask you to leave the un-

homely shelter you have here. Will you love me and wait for me?" He caught her in his arms and held her close.

"Oh, how will you bear a life so different from what you are accustomed to? You—" she cried.

"What! Do you think I have so beggarly a spirit that I cannot bear a little hardship; that I am incapable of anything better than being a fine gentleman?" he interrupted. "You promise me your company on life's road, when I have smoothed it a bit——"

"Hear me, Val. We must part quite—quite free from all engagement; God knows what changes——"

Further words of wisdom were arrested, for Val, encouraged by something in her pathetic eyes, suddenly pressed a kiss on her sweet mouth, his lips clinging to hers with passionate tenderness, while for a moment her expressive yielding confessed the truth of his suspicion—then she struggled to release herself and he let her go, though he still kept one hand.

"My darling, you have promised me everything in that kiss," he whispered.

"I cannot think, I cannot argue," she murmured, "I only know that you are unwise. I should be truer to you if I refused, and, Val, I accept nothing and promise nothing till you have thought coolly and calmly of the future, and——"

"I cannot promise to think calmly and coolly of *you*, Kitty, I never could manage that," and he laughed softly. His handsome hazel eyes lighted up with a gleam of triumph. "We'll weather the storm yet, sweetheart, and have a heavenly life of it together. Now I must go. I am going to interview the old screws who advanced me a lot of money. Uncle Mac advised me to see them after lunch—even wild beasts are less dangerous after a hearty meal. Then I'll be off to Aldershot, and see what can be done about my retirement. You shall know all about every step I take: and we meet again. How shall I live without seeing you? One more, Kitty darling. Yes, I must and will have it."

He was gone, and with him all Kitty's wise and good resolutions. What hours of confused thought, of strange, bewildering, terrifying sweetness passed by, when she could see nothing clearly through the dim, warm, golden haze which hid the future and its sterner probabilities. How

she loved him, in spite of all efforts of will and attempts at self-control!

\* \* \* \*

The following afternoon Val Brooke, in his quarters, was composing an epistle to Kitty, trying to make it very serious and sensible, and toning down the ardent expressions which flowed so naturally from his pen. He was thinking pleasantly, his pen still in his hand, when his orderly brought him a letter. It was addressed to him in small, clear, firm caligraphy, which he did not recognise. He opened it and glanced at the signature, flushing with pleasure as he read, "Yours, Kitty Graeme."

"Uncle McShane," it began, "wants to see you very much. He has met with an accident and sprained his ankle. You will find him at No. 54, Clarendon Terrace, Circus Road, not very far from this, at a Mrs. Dickson's. There has been a frightful scene and quarrel. He will tell you all about everything. Do go and see him as soon as ever you can."

A phrase followed, beginning "Do tell," but was hastily crossed out. Val read these few lines over more than once, and pondered over the conclusion, "Yours, Kitty." Was he to take the expression at its full worth and meaning?

But he must not lose time. He caught up his forage cap and started in search of the Major who was in command just then. The desired twelve hours' leave was not quite so quickly arranged as Val hoped, as a larger number of men than usual were absent. But leave was promised on the next day but one. He, therefore, was obliged to content himself with sending a few lines to Uncle McShane explaining the reason for delaying his visit.

It was about noon the following Saturday when Val reached Clarendon Terrace. He was evidently expected, and was shown into a diminutive front parlour, where his uncle was lying on a black, horse-hair covered sofa, of the stoniest description. There were some cushions, however, under his back and maimed foot, which made him seem tolerably comfortable. He looked very white and wretched, with the corners of his mouth drawn down and expressing extreme despondency.

"Ah! Val, mee dear boy! I knew ye'd come. Faith, it's like a gleam of sunshine to see ye," he cried, brightening up.

"Why, of course, you might be sure I would

come," said Val, shaking hands warmly. "Now tell me all about everything. I had only two lines from Kitty, who said you had a story to tell me."

"Faith, I have. A tragedy — no less — that might be told in blank verse. Anyhow, it's left me blank enough. Now to begin at the beginning. Three or four months ago, you know how your father and Mrs. B. begged and prayed me, on their bended knees—in a manner of speaking—when first I landed in England, to make their house my home?"

Val nodded.

"Well, I did, and they were as good as gold, as hospitable, and just couldn't do enough. Faith, if I'd been a king they couldn't have done more. And I was as proud and pleased as Punch, only there was one or two things I didn't quite like. First, Miss Sarah Jane was cruel *unkind* to that sweet little darlin' Kitty, and you were a trifle *too* kind to her, only I was pleased to see she did not seem to heed you much. Well, then came your trouble, and somehow I seemed to feel that your father took a sort of a doubt against me, though it was all of a minute. I told him many a time I was a poor man, but I could see he didn't believe me. Well, the day before yesterday, I went away to town about a bit of business, and, coming back, waiting for a 'bus at the corner of Baker Street, up came a butcher's cart full tilt, and, among the general noise, I never perceived it. The shaft just took me shoulder and sent me spinning. I fell with the right foot doubled under me. I can't tell how, but I felt pain enough, and bruised all over. They lifted me up and put me into a cab and took me home; and there Kitty—bless her dear heart—sent for the doctor, and he happed me up with rags and lotions, and the Lord knows what. So I got to sleep, and when I woke there was Sam—I mean your father—and Mrs. B., the pair o' them looking as black as thunder, and he says, 'This is rayther unfortunate,' says he, mighty stiff.

"'Bedad, ye'd say so, if ye felt as I do,' says I.

"'I feel a good deal hurt, for that matter,' he makes answer.

"'Yes,' says his wife, 'hurt and ashamed.'

"'God bless us, and what about?' says I, for I was cross with the pain.

"'You may well ask,' she returned.

"'Be quiet, Sarah,' says he. 'I don't wish to be too abrupt. Pray, Mr. McShane, had you a

partner in your business, and what was his name?"

"'To be sure I had,' says I, 'one Moriarty, as big a blackguard as you'd meet.'

"'Ah,' says he with a sort of a moan, 'then I have not been misinformed, and your firm smashed up.'

"'Faith it did, Sam,' I says, 'and I was ruined entirely.'

"With that he up and told me I was an impostor and had traded on him, till he roused me to answer him back and remind him of the ten pounds I used to send him and your poor dear mother, now and again, ay, when I could ill afford it, and they were sore needing help. It was mane of me to do it, but I lost my temper, while that she-devil, his wife—God forgive me for saying it—was throwing in little contemptuous stabs from time to time. Then your father seemed a little ashamed, and said that he did not want me to move till I was all right, and the pair of them went off to dress for a big dinner they were giving that day. Oh, Val, my boy, I was fair broken-hearted. I felt I was a poor, desolate old creature, with nothing to hold on to. I *did* think your father was fond of me for the sake of old times. Faith, the tears came into my eyes and over them."

"By heaven, it was infamous," cried Val, "I am ashamed of my father. His wife has destroyed all that was good in him."

"I must make a long story short," resumed McShane—"give me the lemonade, me dear boy. As soon as they were gone, in came that blessed Kitty, and she took me old face in her hands and kissed me brow as if I was her father, an', says she, 'What can I do for you, at all, at all?'

"'Get me out of this,' says I, 'I won't spend another night under this roof, if I crawled out on me hands and knees.' With that she thought a bit, and asked me a few questions, then she says, 'May is wofully tired and gone to bed, I will slip out and see what I can do for you.' Well, the end is she got these rooms with a good, kind widow woman she knew, and brought back the widow's son and a cab, and between the son and the cabman they carried me down to the side door, while Kitty put some of my things together, and I was safe away before they had finished their second course; and Kitty has stolen out some time of each day to see me. I'm afraid she is in the height of disgrace for what she has done. Mrs. B. will turn her out!"

"I trust no such catastrophe will happen," ejaculated Val.

"If it does," cried McShane, "I'll adopt her, for, though I'm a poor man, I'm not a pauper."

"Uncle," cried Val, "I, too, am not penniless yet, and, in case you should be temporarily hard up, I have a five-pound note very much at your service."

McShane gripped his hand hard. "No, my boy, no," he cried, "I haven't come to that yet. But I thank you. I thank God, who has shown me that life isn't all a howling wilderness. I haven't forgotten you. I told you I knew a nice little heiress, who is pretty much alone in the world. You must meet."

"No, uncle, it's no use," exclaimed Val, "the only woman in the world for me is Kitty Graeme—she, and no other, shall be my wife. It is a long look out, but if you give me the introductions and suggestions you promised, I'll work hard to make a home for her, and why shouldn't I succeed?"

McShane spoke long and eagerly to him as to the advisability of espousing the Canadian heiress, but in vain; and at last the interview was ended by the advent of another visitor, a grave, well-dressed, unmistakably professional man. So Val assured his uncle that he had every expectation of arranging with his brother officers for his retirement, and hoped thus to pay at least a portion of his debts, in consideration of which he yet hoped his father might consent to do the rest.

A very trying week ensued—certainly for Kitty. She was reproached, sneered at, threatened with expulsion from the sacred precincts of Alma Lodge, yet was still retained as their unpaid attaché—too valuable to be dismissed. True, Val's letters were comforting, but even these led to grief. One day, coming in earlier than usual, Sarah Jane pounced on a letter addressed to Miss Graeme, which lay on the hall table, and, recognising Val's writing, raised a tremendous storm.

Cruel accusations and intolerable inuendos drove Kitty to leave the house and take refuge with Mrs. Dickson until she could find employment of some humble description, which would give her bread to eat.

Val knew nothing of all this, for Kitty shrank from telling him, and though he had run up to see his uncle, it was before the above catastrophe had occurred.

He had begun to feel very uneasy at Kitty's

silence, when he received the following missive from Uncle McShane—"My dear boy—Could you take a cup of tea with a poor invalid on Thursday at five o'clock? Your father, in spite of my poverty, has heard reason from my lips, and is coming, so is Kitty, and my poor little Canadian friend, who would like to know some of my people. Don't fail me. Ever yours, M. McSHANE."

"This is a most extraordinary move on my uncle's part," thought Val, as he penned his acceptance. "I have news for him, too."

Thursday was a fine, warm June day, and Val found a gorgeous array of cakes, ices, strawberries and cream, with a modest teapot in a corner to give a correct colouring to the whole.

Uncle McShane, in a very fresh dressing-gown, and generally well-brushed-up condition, was conversing with his professional friend, and before Val had finished his greetings his father arrived, looking blander than Val had seen him for many months. "Let me introduce my legal adviser, Mr. Pounceby," said McShane, waving his hand solemnly towards that precise-looking gentleman. "We won't begin tea just yet, as my young Canadian friend and Miss Kitty Graeme have not yet arrived. They went shopping, I believe, but they will not be late, and he addressed some remarks about the stock market to Mr. Pounceby.

"Well, Val," said his father in a low tone, "I am glad to hear you are likely soon to be out of your troubles. In consideration of such a service to you I am willing to overlook the imposition your uncle has practised."

Here the door opened to admit Kitty. Val had never seen her look so charming. A soft colour warmed her cheek, a sweet smile played upon her lips, and happiness sparkled in her bright eyes.

"Come along, me darling," cried Uncle McShane, "we are all dying for a cup of tea."

"Had we not better wait for the other young lady?" said Mr. Brooke, frowning at the sight of the objectionable Kitty, who did not hear or see him, for her hand was in Val's and his eyes were telling her his joy at seeing her again.

"There's no other to wait for," cried Uncle McShane, with a triumphant chuckle. "*Multum in parvo*, my dear sir, Miss Kitty Graeme and the Canadian heiress are one and indivisible."

"I don't like mystification," said Brooke with a frown.

"Faith, you'll not object to this one, Sam. Mr. Pounceby, sir, I'll trouble you for the explanation."

Mr. Pounceby bowed, produced a brown paper parcel from some corner, and, opening it, said, "This, Mr. Brooke, is a deed of gift, executed the day before yesterday, by our friend, Mr. McShane, in favour of his adopted daughter, Miss Catherine Graeme, by which the sum of £20,000, invested in Indian railways, New Zealand Government securities, and other stocks, now stands in her name."

Dead silence fell upon his hearers, broken after some minutes by an exclamation from Mr. Brooke, "I don't believe it; it's another imposition."

"It's God's truth!" cried McShane, with energy.

"But you were a ruined man less than five years ago," said Brooke.

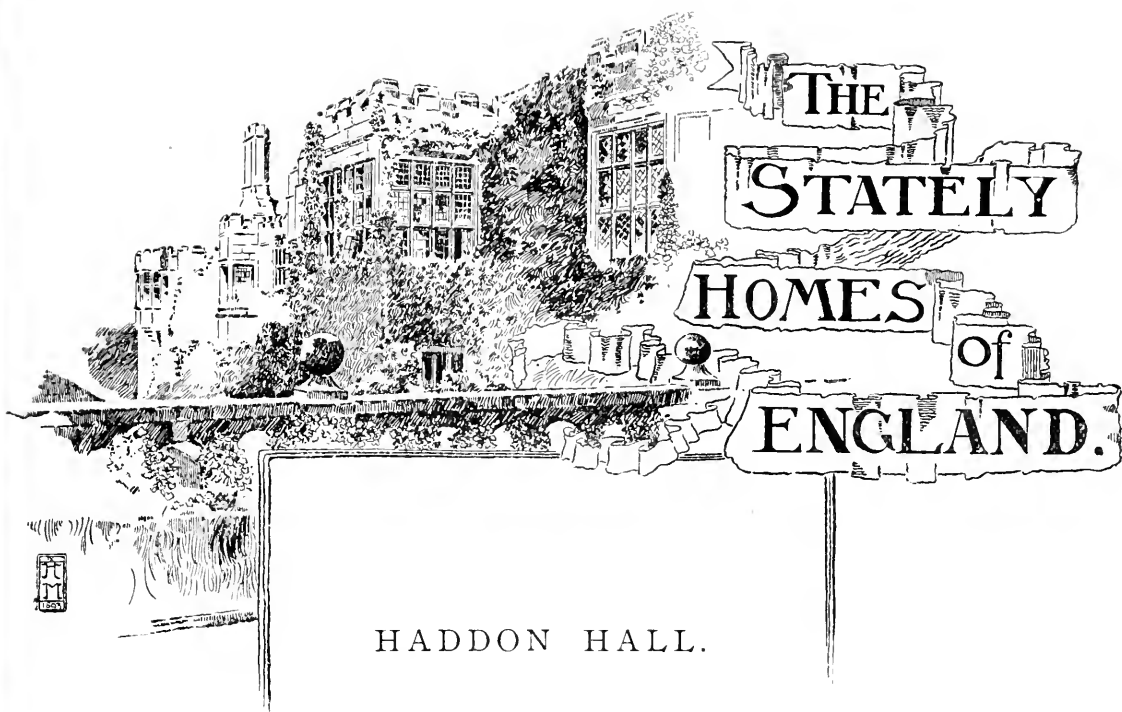
"Ay, and me ruin made me fortune."

"How do you make that out?"

"Hear me. A week before McShane and Moriarty put up their shutters, an old, half-French farmer, that seemed poor enough, came to me with a small sum—all his savings, he said—to put into our business. Moriarty had got round him. I knew we were going, and I couldn't let him throw his hard-got cash away. 'Wait a bit,' says I, 'think the matter well over, and come back in a week.' Before the week was over our smash was known. Well, two years ago that old miser died, richer than anyone dreamed of, and left all his riches to *me*, as the only honest man he knew. So I am entitled to indulge myself in a bit of a treat like this; and though *you* kicked me out, Sam Brooke, that's no reason I should not do my best for your son, who isn't a bit like you," but a McShane from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet! So he's free now, and can stick to his fighting trade, for faith, he's the broth of a boy!"

"And fortune is doubly welcome to me, coming through your hands, dearest Kitty!" cried Val. "We shall at any rate visit 'fresh fields and pastures new,' for I have heard for certain that the regiment is on the route for India in November. Can we ever prove to Uncle McShane the depth and breadth of our affection and gratitude?"

No words can describe the amazement and mortification of the family at Alma Lodge. The feelings of all must be left to the imagination of the intelligent reader, to whose kindly appreciation is also left the character of Uncle McShane.



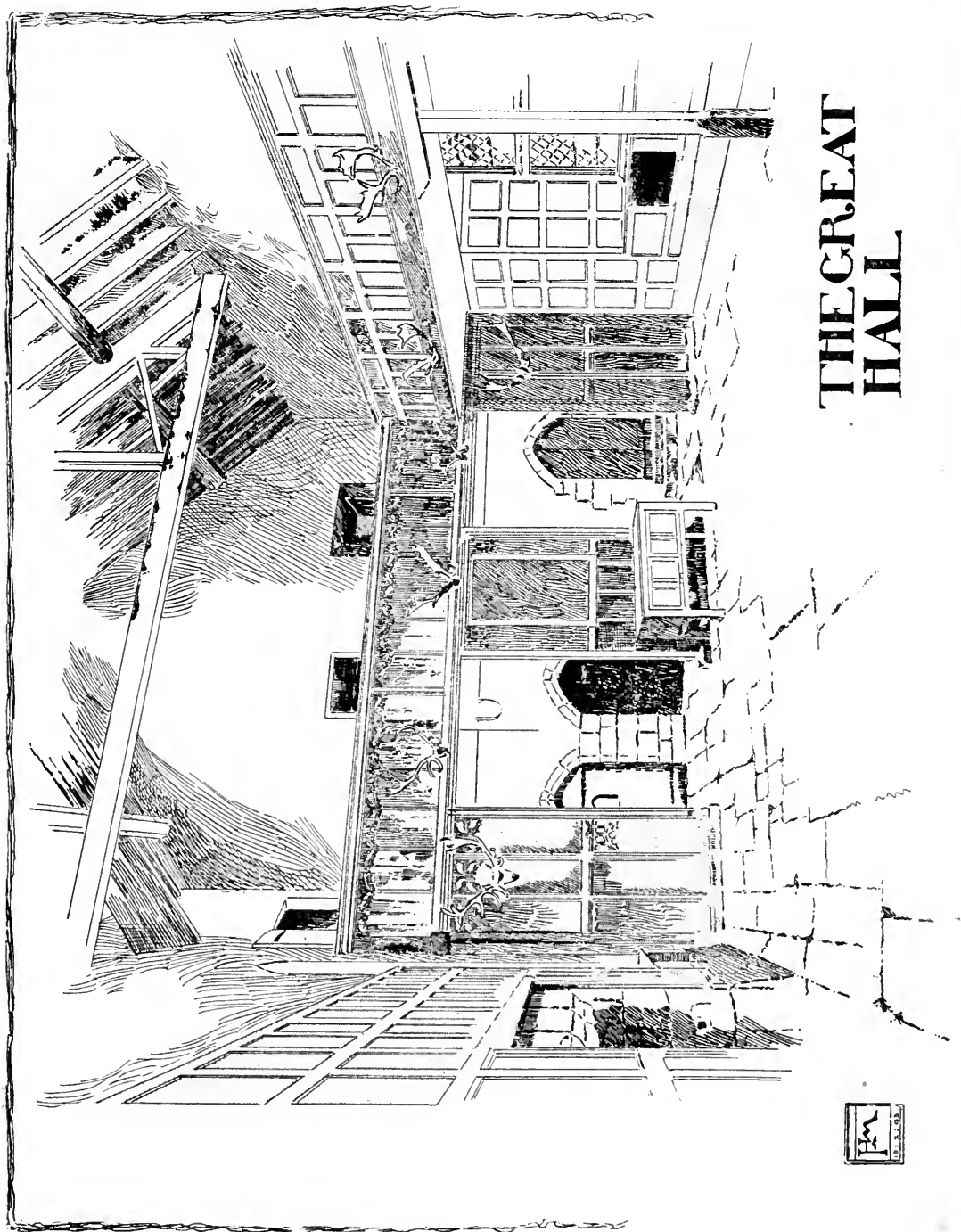
## HADDON HALL.

BY EDWIN OLIVER.

IN the glorious home of the Vernons, where "the King of the Peak" held hospitable sway, and the fair Dorothy loved and won, we have a glimpse into the past more bewitching, in its way, than are the legends breathed from the towering ramparts of a hundred sieges. The din of ordnance and the clash of shivering lance awake no echoes in the peaceful glades of Haddon. The broad meadows by the Wye have never borne the weight of heaped-up dead, nor crimsoned with the hot blood of youth. The Hall is a symbol of the warm grip of friendship, the free and laden board, the stately measure of the country dance. It sings a song of love and merriment through the ages that have little else to tell save sorrow and despair. Hospitality was the breath of its being. The Great Hall was daily thronged with guests and dependants, the former at the high table on the raised dais, and the latter at the long tables against the

walls. The inner man was lavishly provided for, the only demand made upon the company being that full justice should be done to the feast. The modern knight of the blue ribbon would have had but a sorry time there, for it was a penal offence to shun the flowing bowl. There still hangs on the screen in this chamber, as shown in our illustration, a curious instrument, something between a staple and a handcuff, in which was placed the hand of the churlish guest who would not imbibe the requisite amount of my lord's good liquor. His arm being thus raised high above his head, the contents of the goblet were emptied down his sleeve.

The castellated buildings and hall form together the most perfect specimen in the kingdom of an old baronial mansion. As one passes up the lovely vale of Haddon, the towers, rising grandly out of the wooded slopes below, produce a first impression of aggressive strength. But this is soon dispelled



THE GREAT  
HALL





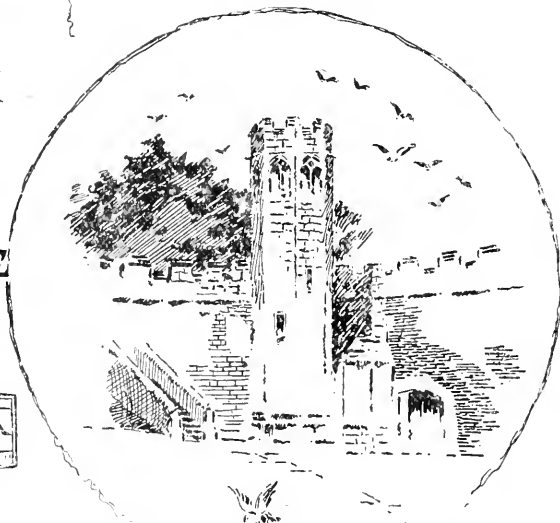
for nothing is more foreign to its natural mien than the cold isolation of a fortress. The quaint recesses in the mullioned windows invite you to

glory had passed for ever to the greater home of the Manners' at Belvoir. We are told that there was consumed, every year, between thirty and forty beeves, four and five hundred sheep, and eight to ten swine. Under the first Duke of Rutland, no less than seven score of domestics were necessary to maintain the splendour of the house.

Unoccupied for two centuries, although lovingly cared for by its owners, the Hall has become little less than a national heirloom, to which some ten thousand pilgrims annually throng. The real interest of Haddon centres round a small group of the Tudor period, that takes tangible shape among the shadowy list of knights and nobles who held the manor previously. The early history is scarcely more than a catalogue of names. William the Norman, among the other vast possessions which he bestowed upon him, presented his natural son, William Peverel, with the manor of Bakewell, including Haddon. The grandson of this great baron, having murdered the Earl of Chester, sought refuge in a monastery, to escape the vengeance



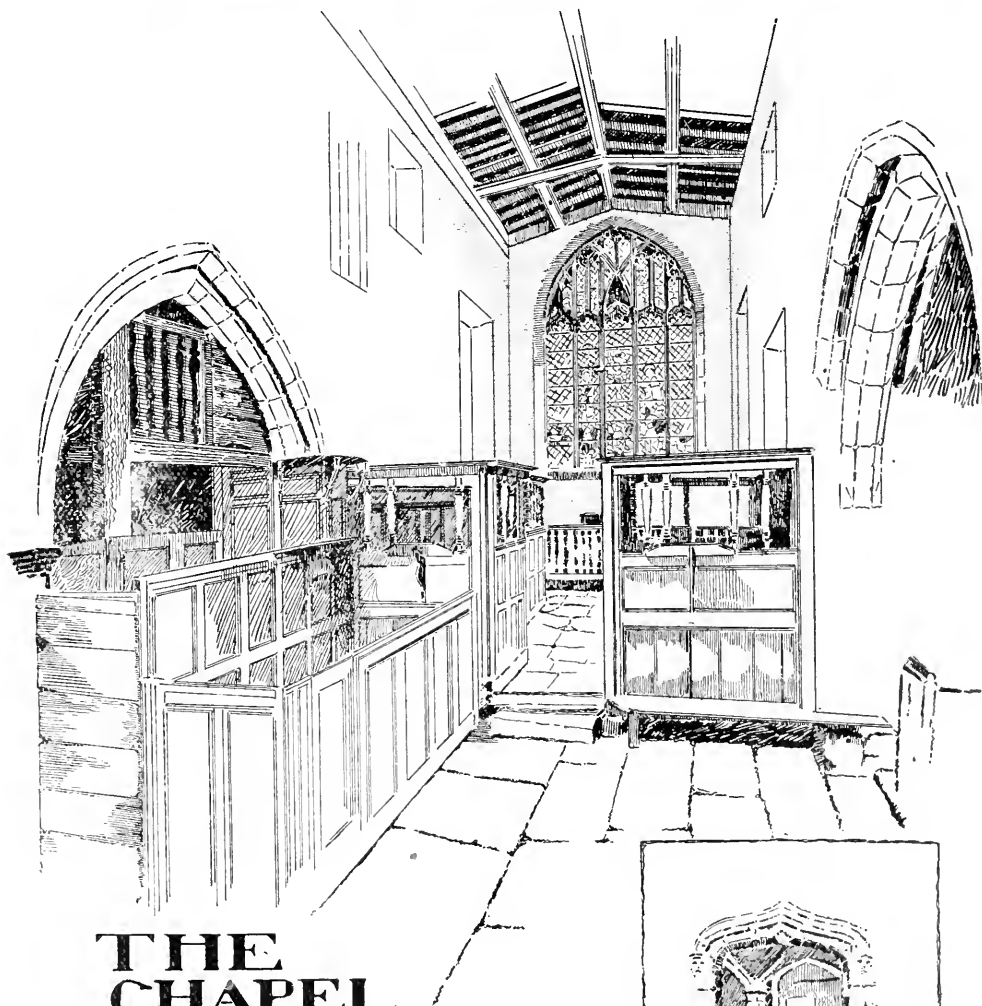
**ENTRANCE  
TO THE  
GREAT  
HALL.**



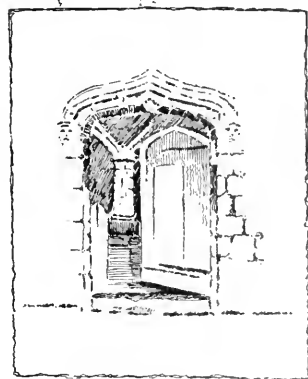
**THE  
CHAPEL  
TOWER**

rest and dream; dainty forms in ruff and hoop glide from the soft shadows of the Grand Gallery and curtsy deeply to you; the open-handed welcome of yore seems still to greet you on the threshold. How thoroughly the task of entertaining was carried out may be gathered from a few details out of the bailiff's accounts of the household expenditure at the Hall in the Christmas of 1663. And this was when its former

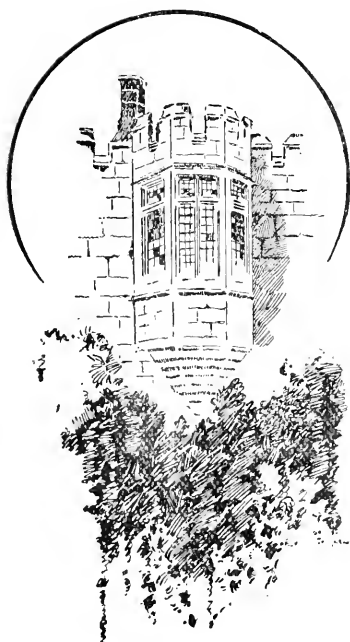
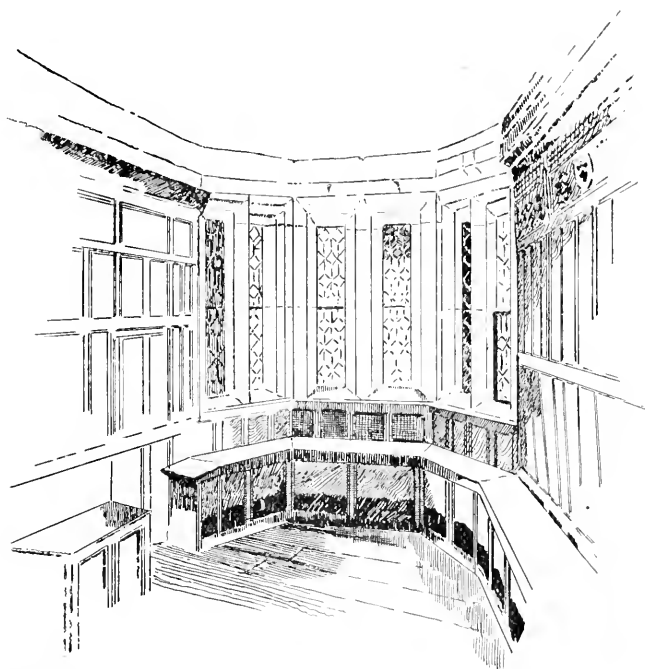
of the new crowned Henry II. On the monarch's entry into Nottinghamshire, Peverel took to flight, leaving his estates to be dealt with at the King's



## THE CHAPEL



## AN ORIEL WINDOW



pleasure. The latter saw good to declare them forfeited, and placed the Avenells in possession of Haddon, as tenants to the Crown. Marriage with the heiress of the Avenells was the means of introducing the famous line of Vernons into the fortunes of Haddon. A document is in the possession of the Duke of Rutland, in which King

John, then Earl of Mortaigne, "by writ directed to his justices, sheriffs, bailiffs, ministers, and all his lieges, granted a license to Richard de Vernon to fortify his house of Haddon with a wall to the height of twelve feet without kernel (an open battlement with embrasures for marksmen to fire from), forbidding him to be disturbed."

The magnificent altar-tomb in Bakewell Church perpetuates the memory of the last and greatest of these Vernons, whose claim to the title of "King of the Peak" was recognized, as we shall presently see, even in the Supreme Court of the Metropolis, and whose possession of two lovely daughters in no way diminished his popularity. It was no empty title, born of good feeling, that was thus be-

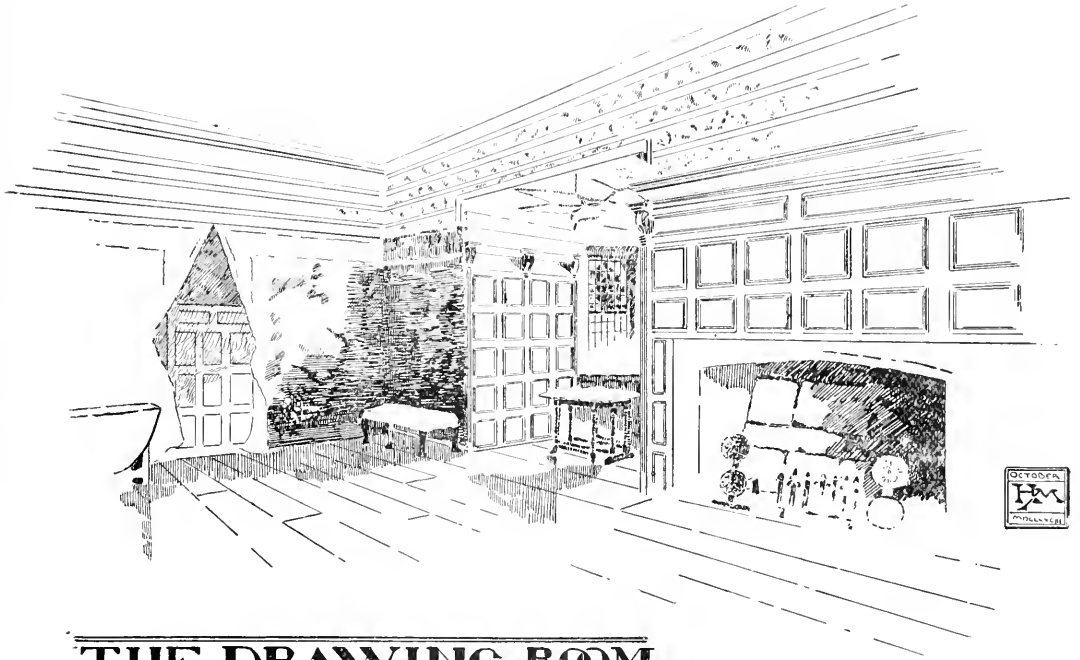
stowed upon him, for not only were his estates in Derbyshire, and out of it, legion, not only did his manner of living eclipse many a royal palace, but he wielded a genuine power, which was sometimes inconveniently felt by those beneath it. His hasty temper occasionally led him to turn from genial host into stern judge, and adopt a method of justice dear to the hearts of our latter-day cousins across the Atlantic. A good instance of this partiality for the summary laws of Judge Lynch is worth telling. The dead body of a pedlar was discovered in an unfrequented part of the Haddon Estates. He had been plying his wares in the district, and was last seen alive under the humble roof of a cottager. Sir George at once had the corpse brought to the Hall, covered with a sheet, and summoned the supposed assassin to appear before him. On being questioned as to the murdered man's whereabouts, the latter denied all knowledge of him. The "King" then tore the covering from the body and commanded everyone present to touch it in turn, declaring, as he did so, his innocence of the crime. The guilty cottager was unequal to the ordeal, and precipitately took

# THE BALLROOM



Re Park





## THE DRAWING ROOM

to flight. He was pursued on horse, and was overtaken in a field at Ashford, which still bears the ominous name of "gallows acre," or "galley acre." Here he was immediately hanged. For this action, Sir George was summoned to appear at London, and at the Court there, was twice called upon to surrender as "King of the Peak." But he made no response to these commands until, at the third time, he was addressed as Sir George Vernon, when he at once gave reply, "Here am I." The fact of his having been indited under his regal nickname, served as an excuse for his acquittal: so he was allowed to depart with merely a warning.

In the opening years of the reign of our "Virgin Queen," the two "Princesses of the Peak" had arrived at that age when the girlish mind, as well as that of the rougher sex, "lightly turns to thoughts of love." The Lady Margaret Vernon, being the senior by a year, had, of course, priority in matters matrimonial, and so her fairer sister, Dorothy, was discreetly kept in the background. But this suppression did not at all suit the temper of the high-spirited beauty of seventeen. The congratulations that poured in upon the espousal of Margaret to Sir William Stanley, the second son of the Earl of Derby, fired her with an ambition

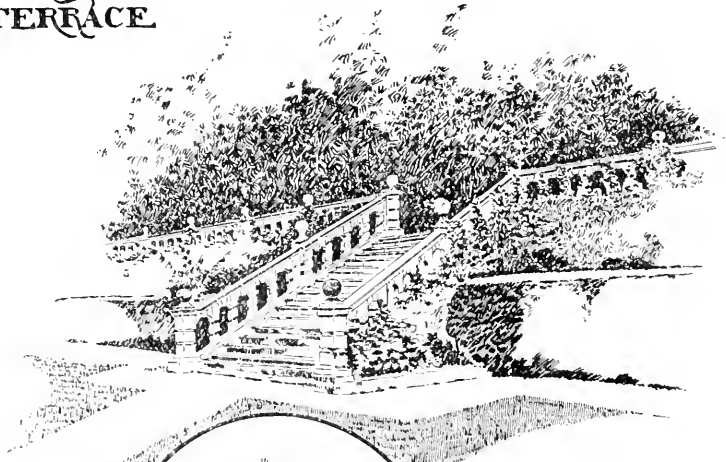
to secure a lover for herself. This was not difficult for so renowned an heiress, whose loveliness is reputed to have outshone any living maiden's, and whose sweet disposition drew to her the worship of young and old. She might have chosen from the cream of "eligibles," but with feminine vagary she set her heart upon plain John Manners, who, albeit a son of the first Earl of Rutland, had no recommendations but those of Nature's giving. These young people mutually fell in love at first sight, and vowed eternal constancy. But their affection was doomed to the inevitable obstacles to true love's course. Her father, step-mother, and even her sister, whose good fortune should surely have softened her, all strenuously opposed the match. Very advanced methods of repression were resorted to. An elderly duenna was set constantly to watch the pretty prize, and poor Dorothy found herself, to all intents, a prisoner in her own home.

But she was more than equal to the occasion. She did not storm or cry her eyes out, as so many another love-lorn girl has done, but submitted meekly to parental authority, appearing as bridesmaid at her sister's wedding in Bakewell Church. Thus she quieted her guardians' appre-

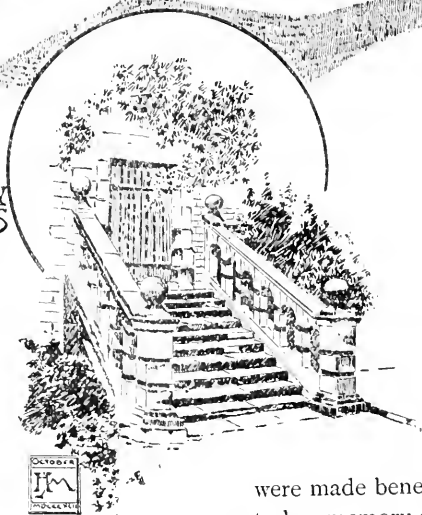
hensions, and no one heeded the strange woodman who lurked for weeks among the thick woods of Haddon, content to steal a stray glimpse of his beloved, or catch a hurried word. So things stood during the festivities consequent upon the brilliant alliance with the Stanleys. On one of these celebrations, when the Grand Gallery is a blaze

Her lover waits for her by the footbridge over the Derwent, with horses and attendants, one of the latter being left behind, with the important mission of putting Sir George upon the wrong track. Throughout the summer night they ride without ceasing, nor stop until the borders of Leicestershire are crossed, when, in the glad light of the

## THE TERRACE



## DOROTHY VERNON'S STEPS.



of splendour, the climax comes. The lively strains of the dance fill the air, the thronging couples are setting to each other in the quaint figures of the time, furtive lovers are vanishing into ingle-nooks and deep recesses, while chaperones are busy with their neighbours' reputations. All are too much occupied to notice a slight, girlish figure stand for one moment irresolute in the ante-chamber of the great room, then pass, like a poet's vision, through the side door and across the moonlit terrace. As the doggerel lines of the bard in the "Reliquary" puts it :

"A faint, sweet face, a glimmering gem,  
And then two figures steal into the light ;  
A flash, and darkness has swallowed them—  
So sudden was Dorothy Vernon's flight."

new day, they are made man and wife.

So the Hall and lands of Haddon passed to the Ducal House of Rutland. Dorothy Vernon herself never possessed the coronet, but her grandson, in 1641, succeeded to the Earldom, and his son was created Marquis of Granby and Duke of Rutland in 1703. During the rebuilding and alteration of Bakewell Church, excavations were made beneath the monument which is erected to her memory and that of her husband, Sir John Manners. The remains of the two bodies that were found there were, with some reason, supposed to be those of the knight and his lady, for the peculiar skull formation of the one answered, in every particular, to the authentic description of the former and to his sculptured effigy. The second form had exquisite auburn hair, which still contained some of the long pins that had been used to fasten it up. This was undoubtedly the last appearance on earth of the famous heroine of Haddon Hall.



**THE  
WEST  
FRONT.  
HADDON HALL.**

When the family of Manners finally ceased to occupy the mansion, it was shorn of all its most valuable contents. Such furniture as was deemed worthy of the trouble was removed to Belvoir, the rest being stored in a huge barn on the north side of the Hall, one end of which had its foundation in a bye-water of the Wye. Kept in such a repository, it is little wonder that the ten wagon loads of historic lumber were eventually used as inferior fuel. The same fate was shared by the fifteen bedsteads that were stored in an old granary. These acts of Vandalism emanated from the Duke's agent, about the year 1760, whose pleasing custom it was, when the Hall required reslating, to sell such ancient relics as were unfit for burning, in order to raise the needed funds. Among the brass articles disposed of were "curious candlesticks, eighteen inches in diameter at the bottom, with rich moulding;" also some curtain rods, and carved bedposts having "knobs" in the

middle and being richly carved, a foot and a half in diameter. We have these details of depredation from William Hage, who was caretaker and guide of the Hall at the time. He was a direct descendant of the John Ward, doorkeeper in 1527, whose portrait still hangs in the Banqueting Hall, and whose claim to immortality rests upon the fact that he was discharged six times for drunkenness, and ended his days a victim to Bacchus. Hage tells the following story of the Earl who was Dorothy Vernon's grandson. It has become a cosmopolitan joke in various renderings, but it may interest our reader to know where it originated, especially as it brings out the genial qualities of the old Earl, and the careful thrift of the mistress. I will give it in the very words of the ancient janitor:—

"A great butcher, who used to fit the family of Haddon with *small* meat, a fat man, weighing eighteen stone, named John Taylor, from Darley

Dale, came at Christmas time, when they were keeping open house, and the old Earl's wife would not let the butter go into the larder till she had seen it; so it remained in the old family hall, and stood there for some hours. The butlers (of whom there were two, one for the small beer cellar, and

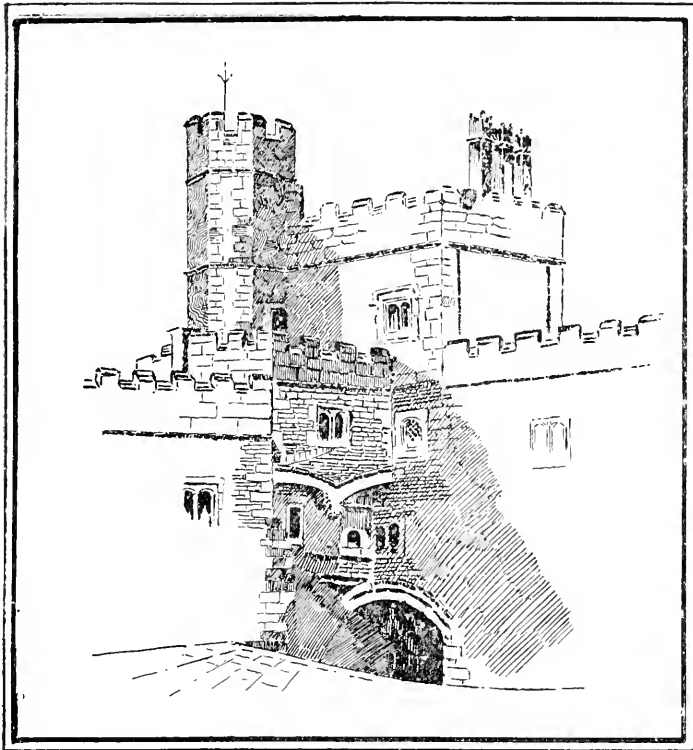
the butter, and pops one pound of butter within his coat on one side, and another pound on the other side, This was observed; and the butler from the strong beer cellar came up to the butcher, saying, 'Jack, it is Christmas time. I have a famous *Jack* of strong beer, and you shall have it



one for the strong) had, for several weeks before, missed two pounds of butter every week; and they could not think what had become of it or who had taken it. So they determined to watch, one butler spying through the little door, and the other through the great door; when presently the great butcher came as usual for orders for small meat; and after looking round, he lays his fingers upon

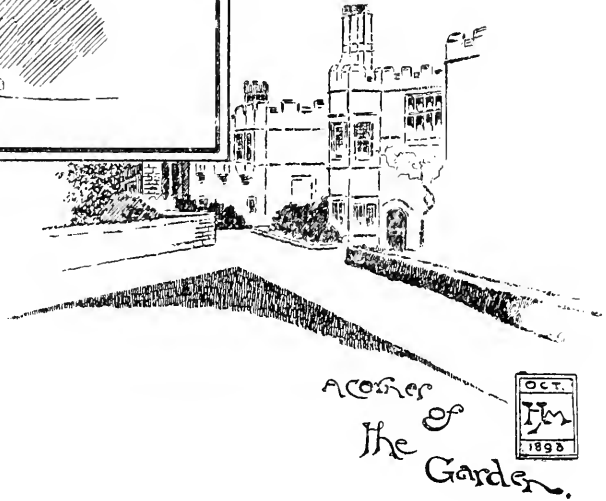
before you go. Sit down by the kitchen fire.' He sat there awhile, when the butler, handing him the flagon, said, 'Don't be afraid of it, I'll fetch some more.' And as he sat near the fire the butter on one side, melting with the heat, began to trickle down his breeches into his shoes. 'Why, Jack, said the butler, 'you seem a great deal fatter on one side than on the other. Turn yourself round;





IN THE  
LOWER  
COURTYARD.

you must be starved on this side.' He was obliged to comply; and presently the butter ran down that side also; and afterwards, as he walked up the Hall, the melted butter ran over the tops of his shoes. 'The Earl,' continues Hage, "made a laughing stock of it; but if such a thing was to be in these days, the man would be turned out of the family."



ACROSS  
THE  
GARDEN.

# INTO THE LIGHT.

BY JOHN STRANGE WINTER.

"A light of duty shines on every day  
For all."  
—WORDSWORTH.

## CHAPTER I.

THE room was large and most cosily furnished: the light from the blazing fire played on the rich tones of old tapestry and gilded cabinets, on couches and chairs covered with heavy brocades, on picture-frames and old china, and on the figure of a very old woman, huddled up on a very wide sofa drawn near to the fireside.

"How are you feeling now, Grannie?" asked a fresh young voice, which came somewhere from the neighbourhood of the door.

"No better . . . very ill to-day, Bliss," was the reply, and truly the old lady's voice sounded like the voice of a very old woman and also a very sick one.

The girl called Bliss advanced into the circle of light cast by the fire. "Is the pain so bad, dear?" she asked, in a tone of infinite pity, taking one of the slender old hands in her own strong young grasp and slowly smoothing it up and down.

"Not so bad now you have come, Bliss."

Bliss drew a low stool near to the couch and went on stroking and smoothing the wrinkled hand. "It is hard you should suffer so, dear," she said gently. "Have you been wanting me? Why didn't you send for me? I would have come half-an-hour ago."

"I thought you would be coming. I don't want to make a slave of you," the old woman said, gazing at the girl with a pair of short-sighted and startlingly blue eyes. "Where is Monica?"

"She is upstairs," Bliss answered, still softly chafing the hand she held.

"What is she doing? Why does she never come near me?" the old lady asked, querulously.

"Well, Grannie, dear, Monica is a little excited to-day. You see it is her first ball, and she is busy putting the finishing touches to her gown."

"A pretty like figure she is to go to a ball," the old woman went on. "It is seventy years

since I went to my first ball. I was just sixteen, and I was a beauty then—the toast of three counties. But Monica—pooh, she ought to go to bed and try to grow pretty."

"You are very hard on Monica," said Bliss, laughing outright at the old lady's blunt remarks. "A good many people think her very pretty; I do, for one."

"Pretty," cried old Lady Mary, with a sudden access of energy, "why she is just about as pretty as a clothes prop. Oh—oh—Bliss—the pain—Bliss—Bliss."

In a trice they had forgotten Monica Forde as completely as though she had never lived. Bliss flew to the little table where the different medicines were kept, and began, as steadily as her shaking fingers would allow, to count out a certain number of drops from a curiously-shaped bottle into a wine-glass half full of water. "Drink this, Grannie," she said, holding the glass to Lady Mary's lips. "Steady, dear, steady. There, that is better, is it not?"

For a few minutes the old lady did not—nay, could not—speak. Then she looked up piteously at the girl, her brow damp with agony, her face pale and worn, and her whole body shrunk and exhausted with the violence of the spasms which had racked her small slight frame. "I don't know what I should do without you, Bliss," she gasped, painfully. "You were rightly named when they called you Bliss. You've been my bliss ever since I first fetched you away from Jersey eighteen years ago. You won't go away; you won't desert me—promise me that you won't do that."

She clung to the girl with a tenacity which was wonderful in one of her years and infirmities, and Bliss petted and soothed her as if she had been the older of the two. "Dear Grannie, I am not thinking of going away," she answered, soothingly. "Don't worry yourself about such a thing. I would not go away and leave you to bear your pain alone for all the world."

"Ah, it is easy to say 'No' to all the world," returned Grannie, in her most cynical tones.

"You are better," said Bliss, smiling at her and nodding her graceful head.

"I don't mean it, child," the old woman cried. "No, no, I never mean it when I let slip those bitter things. I've lived too long. That is just the truth."

"Not too long for me, dear," said Bliss, instantly. "But tell me, would you not like a cup of tea? Your drops always make you so thirsty."

"Yes, yes, you always know what I want before I want it," Lady Mary cried, leaning back on her pillows with a weary air.

Bliss rang the bell. "Bring her ladyship's tea, and as soon as you can get it," she said to the servant who answered the summons.

"I hope my lady has not had another attack," said the man, with much concern.

"Yes, Walters, another very bad attack, and tea is the one thing, as you know."

"In two minutes, ma'am," he said, bustling softly out of the room.

"What was Walters talking about?" the old lady asked, in her indistinct, high-pitched voice.

"He was afraid you had had another attack, Grannie," Bliss replied. "He is dreadfully concerned."

"A good creature, a very faithful creature," murmured Lady Mary, weakly.

"Oh, quite devoted to you, dear," said Bliss, who thought a great deal of the elderly servant, who had been with her grandmother more years than she had been in the world.

It was wonderful what a cup of strong and fragrant tea did for the old lady, who revived under its influence to an almost incredible extent. "Why doesn't Monica come and get some tea?" she exclaimed, crossly, at last. "What can the silly child be doing all this time?"

"Chiefly standing rapturously looking at her new dress and wondering how many partners she will get, with now and then a qualm that perhaps she won't get any at all," answered Bliss, with a gay laugh.

"What a little fool," remarked Lady Mary, with huge contempt. "When I used to go to balls, I never had any qualms. I left those for the men."

"Ah, but you were the toast of three counties Grannie!" suggested Bliss, slyly.

"And Monica will never be that—no, nor of one," said the old lady, with decision. "Another cup of tea, Bliss; not quite so sweet, child. What is Monica going to wear to-night?"

"All white, Grannie," Bliss replied. "Very soft and fluffy white, with white roses here and there."

"That is right enough," Lady Mary admitted.

"By-the-by," said Bliss, "you have not given her anything to wear round her neck."

"I know," was the very unsatisfactory reply.

"But you are going to give her something out of your pretty store," Bliss went on, in her own masterful way. "You gave me something when I came out, and you should not make distinctions between us. She is your grandchild just the same as I am."

"Well, I'll see."

"I'll go and fetch your case," said Bliss cheerfully.

"No, no, you haven't told me what you are going to wear yourself yet."

"Pink, Grannie, all pink—dress, shoes, fan, flowers, even my gloves. I am to be all pink," she answered.

She went away then and fetched a jewel-case of goodly size, which she put down in front of the old lady, well-knowing that it would amuse her and take her out of herself better than anything else she could suggest. Lady Mary roused herself and sat up, turning over the glittering contents like a pleased child—as indeed she really was.

"These," said Bliss with decision, taking out a string of large and lovely pearls. "These are the very things for a young girl to wear on her coming out."

"No, no; much too good; and they go with the pearls that I gave you two years ago. No, no; this, if you like, but not the pearls on any account. They are for you."

"Oh, Grannie, what a dear you are," Bliss cried, for what young girl can resist rare and lovely pearls? "And you will give her the turquoises? Well, they are very beautiful. They will go with her white frock charmingly."

"Put them round your neck," said Lady Mary, holding out the string of pearls.

Bliss bent her head. "You put them on, dear," she said gently.

With trembling hands the old lady clasped the

pearls around her grand-daughter's shapely throat. "Bless you, my dear," she said. "My Bliss;" and for answer, Bliss took the withered, slender hand and kissed it.

## CHAPTER II.

THREE hours had gone by. The two girls at the Manor House were dressing for their ball, and chattering like two monkeys over the process.

"How good of Grannie to give me such a beautiful necklace," exclaimed Monica Forde, as she clasped the torques round her neck. "She is a dear old thing."

"They suit your dress to perfection," replied Bliss, looking at her critically. "Yes, what is it?" she asked, turning to a maid who had entered the room.

"With her ladyship's love," said the girl, unfolding the wrappers from two bouquets, one of white flowers, with white streamers, the other of French roses, tied with pink ribbons. "And this for Miss Markham, and there is a note with it."

"Lucky girl to have two," cried Monica, turning herself slowly round before the glass that she might see the full effect of her appearance.

Bliss took the second bouquet, with a burning blush rising in her cheeks, and, opening the note, read it with a tender light in her eyes, which augured well for the writer thereof. It was very short and very much to the point.

"MY BLISS,—Forgive me for presuming to call you so without your permission. I greatly hope that from to night you will let me call you so for always. I send you some flowers. Will you honour me and make me very happy by carrying them to-night? Dear Bliss, you must know how, for weeks and weeks, I have been trying to tell you how I love you, to tell you all that is in my heart. I go away to-morrow early, and join the *Euphrates* in the afternoon. I may be years away; I shall be away for ever if you are cruel to me to-night. I live in hope, and, need I say, in the direst suspense?—Yours always, ALICK FEATHERSTONE."

Bliss thrust the note down into the safe recesses of her low bodice. A happy smile was playing about her mouth as she took up the beautiful bouquet of flowers which her lover had sent her.

She never questioned whether she should wear them or not, but said to the maid, "Justine, if her ladyship asks you, by-and-bye, what flowers I wore, be sure you do not tell her. I will tell her to-morrow why I chose these."

"Certainly, Mad'm'selle," said Justine, who understood perfectly, and knew quite well from whom the flowers came.

A moment later Lady Mary's own maid came running in, without any attempt at ceremony. "Oh, Miss Bliss," she cried, "do come quick, quick, my lady is so ill and begging for you." By this time Bliss was half-way to her grandmother's room, and, seeing what was wrong, flew to get the 'drops, which were the only medicine that in any way alleviated the frightful agony that, sooner or later, would assuredly bring her frail life to a close.

"Grannie," she said imperatively, "let me lift you up while you drink this."

The very sound of her voice seemed to act like a charm on the gasping woman, and she managed to hold the glass so that she was able to drink its contents easily. "Now that is better," she said soothingly. But the old lady was shaken and exhausted beyond words to express, and she gazed up at Bliss with an anxious look in her eyes, that went with a pang to the girl's inmost heart.

"I'm much worse," she moaned. "Two attacks in one day, Bliss. I'm very much worse."

"I hope not, Grannie dear," said Bliss, who knew that what she said was true.

"You won't leave me, Bliss? Must you go out to-night?" Lady Mary cried, in a pathetic, imploring whisper.

Before Bliss could speak, however, the door opened and Monica came in. "Is Grannie ill?" she asked, in an awe-struck voice.

"Poor Grannie has had a bad turn," said Bliss, still holding the old lady's hand in hers.

"Because Mrs. Greville has just come, or rather she came ten minutes ago; and she is so impatient. She says she cannot wait unless we come at once."

"Then let her go," said Bliss curtly.

"But, Bliss, we can't go to the ball without her," Monica persisted. "What are we to do?"

"Don't leave me, Bliss," came the imploring tones from the bed.

Bliss hesitated for a moment. A wild thought of all that she was giving up, by not going to the

ball, flashed across her mind. Her heart sank down to zero, at the remembrance of the lover who was going away on the morrow, and of how impossible it would be to send to him at that hour and with her grandmother so ill. She drew a deep breath . . . after all, Grannie had been everything to her during all her life—father, mother, brother, sister, *all*. Should she then fail her, just for the sake of her own advantage or pleasure? No, a thousand times, no.

"Grannie," she said softly, bending down over the couch, "you don't mind Monica going to the ball, do you?"

"No, no, but not you," came the feeble reply. "You stay with me, Bliss, you stay with me."

"Yes, dear, yes, I will stay. Monica, you go. Don't keep Mrs. Greville waiting. Tell her how it is."

And Monica went. I am bound to confess that Bliss saw her go with a great pang at her heart and a wild wish that she could have sent a message by her to explain to Alick Featherstone why she had not come.

But it was impossible. Monica had never seen Mr. Featherstone, and Mrs. Greville was impatiently waiting below, while poor old Grannie was hanging upon Bliss's movements all the time, as if, if she were to let her out of her sight for even a moment, she would certainly be spirited away.

So she went to her room and slipped off her pretty gown, telling Justine to put it away, and then she went back to Lady Mary's room to sit by her and soothe her, and try to make her forget the awful pain if she could. And, all the time, in her own heart a dirge was wailing, wailing the funeral hymn of her life's sweetest love-story.

Heavy as lead was her heart, yet she was outwardly gentle and patient with the suffering Grannie, who in reality had worked herself into a fever by her dread of the girl's going out of the house for a few hours. And, presently, she had the satisfaction of seeing her drop off into a fairly sound sleep. She remained watching her for a few minutes, and then the maid beckoned her out of the hot and stifling room.

"Do go down, Miss Bliss," she said. "Walters has some hot coffee waiting for you, and you may be wanted again before the night is over. I've sent for the doctor. I have it on my mind that my lady

is worse than we think. I couldn't ask you, for fear she heard me and was frightened."

"You were quite right," said Bliss, looking down upon the wan and suffering face among the pillows.

"But do go down," entreated the maid, "and stay a little while. I'll fetch you if my lady wants you."

"Thank you, Mercy," said Bliss, gratefully.

So she went down to the deserted morning-room where Lady Mary usually sat, and the stately Walters brought her fresh coffee, and asked the latest news of his lady. And then he went away and she was left alone, and free to think over the hopeless and unavoidable ruin which, that evening, had come into her life.

She sat there for a long time, trying to persuade herself that perhaps it was all for the best, that when one tried very hard for a certain thing and failed in getting it, it generally turned out to be all for the best, trying to make believe that there was a fate against her meeting with Alick Featherstone, and that she ought and would, if she were a sensible girl, take the evening's mishap as a warning, and think no more about him.

Yet she could not help thinking, thinking, thinking about him, thinking how handsome and brave and true he was, and how dearly and utterly she loved him, how she loved the very ground he walked on, and the very air that he breathed. And while she was sitting there, crouched up in a big chair near to the fire, the door opened and Walters, with a highly apologetic look, came in.

"I am very sorry to disturb you, Miss Bliss," he said, with a deprecating cough, "but there is a gentleman who says he must see you, if only for a minute. I told him that I was quite sure you would not be able to see him, and that my lady was very seriously ill; but he said he knew that, and that it was a matter of life and death, and he must see you, because he is going abroad to-morrow. And as he was so very urgent, I ventured to ask you."

Walters did not add that the gentleman's urgency had taken the form of a golden sovereign; but that was neither here nor there.

The girl's heart gave a great throb and then bounded on as if it had gone mad. "What is his name?" she asked, with a very fair show of calmness.

"Mr. Featherstone," Walters answered.

"Well, you had better show him in. It *is* rather late, but I will see him."

So the respectable Walters retired, and, after a moment's absence returned, bringing Alick Featherstone in his wake. Bliss rose to meet him, and found herself confronted by a splendid creature in the full uniform of a Lancer regiment: but she did not speak till Walters had closed the door behind him.

"I have come for my answer," he said, simply.

"How did you know?" she asked.

"I happened to be introduced to your cousin, and she was full of her disappointment at your not being able to come to-night—and your's," he added, in an undertone.

"Monica knew nothing at all about mine." Bliss cried—but something in her tone encouraged him to go on.

"I gathered from her exactly how it was, and

how you would not leave poor Lady Mary; and as I am off in the morning, I thought it would be best to drive straight over and find out whether I am to come back again or not."

"I could not leave. My dear old Grannie has been an angel to me all my life," Bliss cried, "and it was all I could do for her, to stay with her when she is ill. She is asleep now, heaven be thanked, but her suffering to-day has been something dreadful."

"I am glad not to find her worse," he said. "But about my coming back——"

"If you want to come back," began Bliss demurely.

"The question is whether *you* want me to come," he said eagerly.

"If you go by my wishes"—said she.

"Yes?"

"Then you won't go away at all," Bliss answered. And so she came out of the gloom of duty into its light!





THE Honourable Sophonisba Del Cruz sat with her feet on the fender and her head on one side, balancing her teaspoon on the edge of her cup, and meditating on many things, while reflecting on none.

Her luxurious surroundings seemed to give her little content, for her expression was devoid of both calm and energy; she looked thoroughly discontented, and hopelessly bored. She then gave an impatient little shrug and drew a sharp, short sigh: the truth was, she was utterly tired of being an old maid, and yet did not see her way out of it. Of course she did not admit that fact to herself: she would have considered such plain-speaking far too unladylike. All she said was, "Things have taken a strange turn, I wish I was in the Enchanted Land."

"So you can be in a jiffy;" said a voice in her ear. "You have only to lean your head on your hand and close your eyes: put your tea-cup down before you do it though, because it's 'Green Dragon:' and you'll be there before you can count three."

This from the spirit of the tea, as you of course divined, who, having set the ball going, discreetly vanished into the smoke rising from the fragrant beverage he inspired; and took himself off to less luxurious, though happier quarters, where he flattered himself he could be of more use.

Meantime the lady took his advice, settling herself into the most comfortable of positions, and this was how the Honourable Sophonisba became aware of the interesting romance that was taking place between Tsi-te-see and Gang-tu-sun in the Enchanted Land.

Tsi-te-see was so called because, strange to say, every one sighed to see her, though for very different reasons. The young men of her acquaintance sighed to see her because she was so very beautiful, that having once seen her they never felt happy again when out of her sight: so naturally *they* sighed to see her. The girls of the porcelain village where she lived, sighed to see her, because she was so much more beautiful than they were. Her mother sighed to see her, because she was so heedless. She used to sweep out the sitting-room with the end of her lovely long pig-tail, quite regardless of how it would wear out, and how vexed she would be, to have lost, so early in life, the distinguishing grace of a long and thick-ended pig-tail.

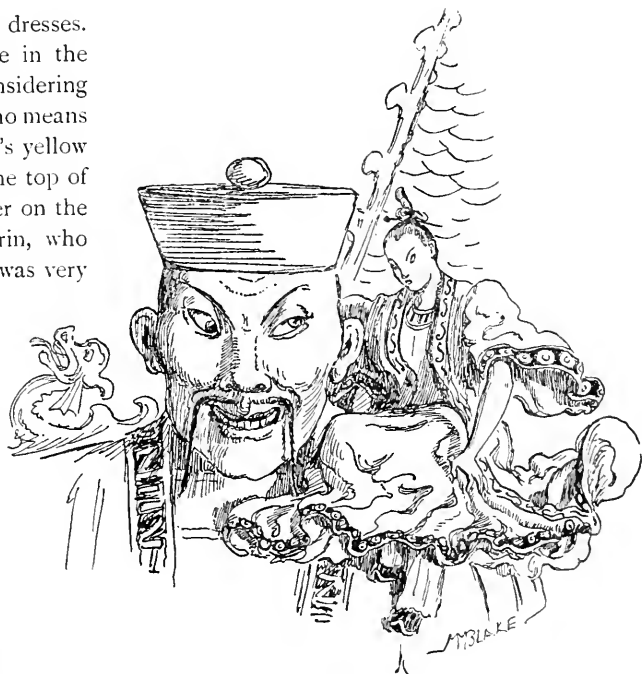
Another of her misdemeanours was, that she did not take proper care of her beautiful paper dresses. She was always dressed in yellow tissue paper: she very often came back wet through, with all the stiffness gone, so that her poor mother had con-

stantly to be cutting out new yellow paper dresses. Sometimes Tsi-te-see had a new one twice in the same day : which was very extravagant, considering that Hung-Wak, Tsi-te-see's papa, was by no means rich. Once the wind spread out Tsi-te-see's yellow paper dress, and carried her right up to the top of the largest temple in the town, and set her on the shoulder of the great blue China Mandarin, who lived on the outside of the Pagoda. He was very well pleased to have her there ; but the capricious wind whisked her off in another instant, and set her down at her mother's door. When she recounted her adventure, no one would believe her. "You are a lying little girl," they said ; "No," said Tsi-te-see, "I'm not a lying, but a flying, little girl, ask the Mandarin if I am not ;" but they told her she knew nothing at all about it ; and in time she found out they were right : for they so altered her own tale, and made so many changes in *their* versions of it, that she became bewildered

at last, and really admitted they were right, and that she did *not* know anything about it. This, and similar delinquencies quite wore out her poor mother's spirits, and made her fully justify her name of Sob-a-wa, for the tears were never out of her eyes, and the sobs were for ever choking up her throat. Her husband was not much comfort to her either, for he cared for little beyond well-hung bacon, and was of a contumacious disposition.

We must now describe a few of the customs of the youths and maidens of the Enchanted Land, and then we will have the climax, and I will let you go. I shall not detain you for the moral, because in the Enchanted Land no one is ever allowed to point a moral ; they say that all pointed weapons are forbidden by the Mandarins, as being dangerous, and likely to draw blood. So if you happen to be carrying a pointed remark about with you, and wish to get rid of it, you must climb over the Great Wall, and call it out on the other side ; then it is picked up by the birds, and they build it into their nests, and then, when the rich Hung-Waks, and Thik-Syds take their bird's-nest soup, they swallow down the remark too, and being in a good temper, it doesn't do them any harm.

The science of doing this well is called in the Enchanted Land, Takt. Of course, such a pretty girl as Tsi-te-see had many lovers, there were

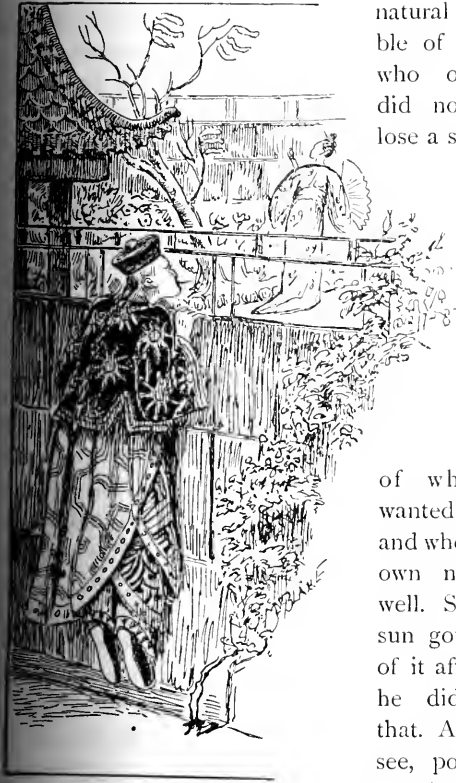


hundreds and hundreds of them, all blue and shiny, dressed in thin porcelain.

They were very careful not to run up against each other, lest they should crack. Of all these lovers, there were only two who had any real likelihood of getting the charming Tsi-te-see for a wife. They were Gang-tu-sun, and Wo-Bang. When Tsi-te-see came out of her father's door to go to beautiful dances among the lanterns, in the summer nights, she had to walk down a little garden-path, with flowers on each side : and she always chose to walk the side nearest the flowers that Gang-tu-sun paid by the night to sing her to sleep. These flowers were very faithful, and they sang all night to her of Gang-tu-sun, and his beautiful pink china palace in the dark mountain forests of the South.

The china flowers that Wo-Bang paid, that were on the other side of the path, could not speak sense ; they were much more expensive to hire, and you set them in motion by pulling a string, but then they did not speak nor smell. They only made a jingling noise, so that Tsi-te-see could not hear what Gang-tu-sun's flowers were saying ; which naturally forced her to get up from her pink rose-leaf bed, and go down to the flowers in the night, and lean down close to them to listen, and kiss them too sometimes, which was all very





natural and sensible of Tsi-te-see, who of course, did not wish to lose a single word

of what they wanted to tell her, and who knew her own mind quite well. So Gang-tu-sun got the best of it after all, but he didn't know that. All he could see, poor fellow, was that Tsi-te-see

walked closer to his flowers than to Wo-Bang's, and from that he derived in his suspense less than his proper amount of consolation.

When Tsi-te-see was going to a Dance, the flowers all wanted to get sole permission for flowers of their kind only, to accompany her to the Dance, and smooth the path for her return.

She was very dark ; and the marigolds thought they set off her beauty ; so they teased the poor Mandarin nearly out of his life, to give them leave to spring up all one season, around her, at every step she set. But while the Mandarin was considering what was justice, the poppies, their light heads filled with vanity, sent their fluff flying around Tsi-te-see's house, so that long before the poor Marigolds could come up (for they did succeed at last in wringing a tardy consent from the Mandarin) the whole place was filled with scarlet poppies, who always declared they never could account for finding themselves there.

This explains the marigolds turning so deep a colour—from jealousy of course—and it also explains the reason of Tsi-te-see's being found so often asleep in the garden, with her head always

lying among Gang-tu-sun's forget-me-nots ; which the neighbours could not account for. "One would have thought," they said, "that a girl, so well educated, particularly in music, would have preferred listening in her dreams to those expensive china-bells of Wo-bang's that jingle in such perfect time, and never suggest any tiresome things to think about." But in the Enchanted Land one doesn't always do just what one's neighbours would have one to do : and Wo-bang, who was mean as well as rich (though not so rich as Mun-nee-Bagg, his friend), grew very jealous of Gang-tu-sun.

When Tsi-te-see came out of her room, in her beautiful new yellow-paper dress, ready to go to the Feast of Lanterns, two new poppies came every night of the Festivities, and fixed themselves close to her ears for ear-rings ; and seven large and beautiful butterflies always came to form her tiara. The Peacock-Butterfly, in the middle, said he considered it worth all the trouble of struggling out of





the chrysalis, only to have secured the honour for one of his family always to form the central ornament of Tsi-te-see's tiara.

But one night it was very sad; and this was the reason. Tsi-te-see had said to the Peacock-Butterfly, as he flew away, "I wish I could go with you up into the air." Now, the Peacock-Butterfly, as you will see, never forgot this. Poor

Tsi-te-see was very unhappy that night. Wo-Bang was jealous of Gang-tu-sun, and yet Gang-tu-sun had left the Feast-of-Lanterns, while Tsi-te-see was still dancing with Wo-Bang. It is true, Gang-tu-sun only went away to order some new flowers with very sweet notes, to sing Tsi-te-see to sleep that night, because he thought it would please her; but Tsi-te-see did not know that, though Gang-tu-sun thought she did.

You see he thought she would have learnt it from the fire-flies at her ears: but they were looking at someone else, and not to be depended on. So poor Tsi-te-see thought Gang-tu-sun had left the dance with Li-Li-Wyt, and this mistaken impression she gathered from the fire-flies, who had far better have been attending to the duty allotted to them, of guarding Tsi-te-see's ears from fictitious reports, for that is what they were paid for.

Poor Tsi-te-see grew paler and paler, as colourless as Li-Li-Wyt herself. The china-bells jingled, and the great gongs thumped, and at last, Tsi-te-see felt so sad that she began to cry. Wo-Bang was very rude to her then. "He said, bluntly, "You are no longer pretty when you cry," and left her. "So long as *you* are gone, I don't mind being ugly," said Tsi-te-see; and then, as I told you, she made that remark to the Peacock-Butterfly, which he never forgot; and as he died the same night, that is not so wonderful.

However, he carefully handed it to his son on the tip of his antennæ, as he fluttered for the last time.

Late at night, Tsi-te-see stood thinking at her window. When she went out that day in her



paper canoe, Wo-Bang had come paddling after her, and would have caught her up, if Gang-tu-sun had not had the foresight to put plenty of strong gum on his paddles, so that he could not, though he made so much noise, keep up with Gang-tu-sun, because the gum made his paddles stick to the water, so that he was hindered. His long pig-tail floated behind him on the water, and Gang-tu-sun had laughed derisively when a large fish, mistaking the tip for a fly, hung on to it, and nearly capsized Wo-Bang.

All this was very dreadful to Tsi-te-see, particularly when she began to think about Li-Li-Wyt; however, the flowers still sang Gang-tu-sun's praises, and just before dawn, Tsi-te-see drew a long sigh—and a great deal of poppy-breath in with it—and then she fell fast asleep. Very soon after, Gang-tu-sun came and told the forget-me-nots that they were to behave very politely to a set of white lilies, whom he had hired to sing with them some beautiful poems that he thought would fill Tsi-te-see's heart with delight.

But alas, quite the reverse happened; for when Tsi-te-see looked out in the morning, she thought that Gang-tu-sun had sent the lilies as a polite way of telling her that she was being forgotten for Li-Li-Wyt; and the forget-me-nots made it worse, by being sulky, and trying to go away.

They lay all limp and flat upon the ground, and Tsi-te-see, who thought they were dead, and didn't know they were only cross, said to herself, "Oh, it's all Li-Li-Wyt now; there is no room left for the forget-me-nots;" and she called out, "O, Peacock-Butterfly, take me away!" Then all the new butterflies—just born out of their chrysa-

lises in the early morning, and headed by the young Peacock-Butterfly, the eldest son and heir of the old one—came in crowds and crowds, and surrounded her. And they faithfully obeyed their King Butterfly, and did as he told them; and Tsi-te-see was so light, that the butterflies took her up easily and carried her right away into the air, as she had wished; and then they took her to Psyche, the Queen of the Air Spirits, and there she is still, waiting for Gang-tu-sun. But poor Gang-tu-sun is still looking for her.

It was all a mistake about Li-Li-Wyt, who is still trying to attract Wo-Bang; and he is very obstinate indeed. Gang-tu-sun cried all the colour out of him, and that is why the branch of the family to which he belongs have always since borne, as an emblem, a white Bachelor's Button.

Gang-tu-sun often says his name is a mere misnomer, for he does not gang soon enough.

You see he really loved Tsi-te-see, and it was very hard to lose her just because those careless fire-flies did not do their duty, for which they were so well paid too.

When the honourable Sophonisba found that this was the course events sometimes took in the Enchanted Land, she set her head straight, and took her feet off the fender, and said, "I may just as well stay where I am, then, for they don't seem to manage their affairs any better there than here;" and she was quite right; they don't manage their affairs very well anywhere, not even in the Enchanted Land. So now, having told you all these interesting particulars, which I am quite sure you would never have found out for yourselves, I will not keep you any longer; and I am quite as sure of the truth of what I have told you, as I am that you cannot possibly reproach me with the length of the moral.



# My Dove



I had a Dove and the sweet Dove died ;  
 And I have thought it died of grieving :  
 O! what could it grieve for, its feet were tied  
 With a silken thread of my own hands weaving.  
 Sweet little red feet! Why should you die?  
 Why would you leave me, sweet bird, why?  
 You lived alone in the forest tree :  
 Why pretty thing, would you not live with me?  
 I kissed you oft and gave you while peas;  
 Why not live sweetly, as in the green trees?

*J. Keats.*



BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

PART I.

## CHAPTER IX.

THE situation of Ronald Lumsden, for whom Lily felt herself to have sacrificed so much, and who showed, as she felt at the bottom of her heart, so little inclination to sacrifice anything for her, was, in reality, a difficult one. It would have been false to say that he did not love her, that her loss was no grief to him, or that he could make himself comfortable without her: which was what various persons thought and said—and he was not unaware of the fact. Neither was he unaware that Lily herself had a half grudge, a whole consciousness that the way out of the difficulty was a simple one; and that he should have been ready to offer her a home, even though it would not be wealthy, and the protection of a husband's name and care against all or any uncles in the world. He knew that she was quite willing to share his poverty, that she had no objection to what is metaphorically called a garret, and would really have resembled one more than is common in such cases—a little flat, high up under the roofs of an Edinburgh house: and to make it into a happy and smiling little home. And as a matter of fact that garret would not have been

inappropriate, or have involved any social downfall either on his side or Lily's. Young Edinburgh advocates in those days set up their household gods in such lofty habitations without either shame or reluctance. Not so very long before the man whom we and all the world know as Lord Jeffery set out in the world on that elevation and made his garret the centre of a new kind of empire. There was nothing derogatory in it: invitations from the best houses in Edinburgh would have found their way there as freely as to George Square; and Lily's friends and his own friends would have filled the rooms as much as if the young pair had been lodged in a palace. He could not even say to himself that there would have been privations which she did not comprehend in such a life: for, little though they had, it would have been enough for their modest wants: and there was a prospect of more if he continued to succeed as he had begun to do. Many a young man in Edinburgh had married rashly on as little and had done very well indeed. All this Ronald knew as well as anyone, and the truth of it rankled in his mind and made him unhappy. And yet on the other side there was, he felt, so much to be said! Sir Robert Ramsay's fortune was not a

thing to be thrown away, and to compare the interest, weight, and importance of that with the suffering involved to young people who were sure of each other in merely waiting for a year or two, was absurd. According to all laws of experience and life it was absurd. Lily was very little over twenty; there was surely no hurry, no need to bring affairs to a climax—to insist on marrying when it would no doubt be better even for her to wait. This was what Lumsden said to himself. He would rather, as a matter of preference, marry at once, secure the girl he loved for his life-companion, and do the best he could for her. But when all things were considered, would it be sensible, would it be right, would it be fair?

This was how he conversed with himself during many a lonely walk, and the discussion would break out in the midst of very different thoughts, even on the pavement of the Parliament House as he paced up and down. Sir Robert's fortune—that was a tangible thing. It meant in the future, probably in the near future, for Sir Robert was a self-indulgent old man—a most excellent position in the world, safety from all pecuniary disasters, every comfort and luxury for Lily, who would then be a great lady in comparison with the struggling Edinburgh advocate. And the cost of this was nothing but a year's—a few years'—waiting, for a girl of twenty-two and a young man of twenty-eight. How preposterous indeed to discuss the question at all! If Lily had any feeling of wrong in that her lover did not carry her off, did not in a moment arrange some makeshift of a poor life, the prelude to a continual, never-ending struggle—it could only be girlish folly on Lily's part: want of power to perceive the differences and the expedencies. Could anything be more just than this reasoning? There is no one in their senses who would not agree in it. To wait a year or two at Lily's age, what more natural, more beneficial? He would have felt that he was taking advantage of her inexperience if he had urged her to marry him at such a cost. And waiting cost nothing—at least to him.

Not very long after Lily left Edinburgh, Lumsden had encountered Sir Robert one evening at one of the big dinner-parties which were the old gentleman's chief pleasure: and he had taken an opportunity to address the young fellow on the subject which could not be forgotten between them. He

warned Lumsden that he would permit no nonsense, no clandestine correspondence, and that it was a thing which could not be done, as his faithful servants at Dalrugas kept him acquainted with everything that passed, and he would rather carry his niece away to England or even abroad (that word of fear and mystery) than allow her to make a silly and unequal marriage. "You are sensible enough to understand the position," the old man had said. "From all I hear of you you are no hot-headed young fool. What you would gain yourself would be only a wife quite unused to shifts and stress of weather, and probably a mere burden upon you, with her waiting-woman serving her hand and foot, and her fine lady ways—not the useful helpmate a struggling man requires."

"I should not be afraid of that," said Lumsden, with a pale smile: for no lover, however feeble-hearted, likes to hear such an account of his love, and no youth, on the verge of successful life, can be anything but impatient to hear himself described as a struggling man. "I expect to make my way in my profession, and I have reason to expect so. And Lily——"

"Miss Ramsay, if you please. She is a fine lady to the tips of her fingers. She can neither dress, nor eat, nor move a step without Robina at her tail. She is not fitted, I tell you, for the wife of a struggling man."

"But suppose I tell you," cried Lumsden, with spirit, "that I shall be a struggling man only for a little while, and that she is in every way fitted to be *my* wife?"

"Dismiss it from your mind, sir; dismiss it from your mind," said Sir Robert. "What will the world say?—and what the world says is of great consequence to a man that has to struggle, even if it is only at the beginning. They will say that you've worked upon a girl's inexperience and beguiled her to poverty. They will say that she did not know what she was doing, but you did. They will say you were a fool for your own sake, and they will say you took advantage of her."

"All which things will be untrue," said Lumsden, hotly.

But then they were disturbed and no more was said. This conversation, though so brief, was enough to fill a man's mind with misgivings—at least, a reasonable man's—prone to think before and not after the event. Lumsden was not one

that is carried away by impulse. The first effect was that he did not write, as he had intended, to Lily. What was the use of writing if Sir Robert's faithful servants would intercept the letters? Why run any risk, when there lay behind the greater danger of having her carried off to England or "abroad," where she might be lost and never heard of more. Ronald pondered all these things much, but his pondering was in different circumstances from Lily's. She had nothing to divert her mind: he had a great deal. Society had ended for her, but it was in full circulation—and he had his full share in everything—where he was. The pressure is very different in cases so unlike. The girl had nothing to break the monotony of hour after hour, and day after day. The young man had a full and busy life: so long in the Parliament House, so long in his chambers: a consultation; a hard piece of mental work to make out a case; a cheerful dinner in the evening with some one; a wavering circle of other men always more or less surrounding him. The difficulty was not having too much time to think, but how to have time enough: and the season of occupation and company and events, hurried on so, that when he looked back upon a week it appeared to him like a day. And he had no way of knowing how it lingered with Lily. He wondered a little and felt it a grievance that she did not write to him, which would have been so very easy. There were no faithful servants on his side to intercept letters. She might have at least sent him a line to announce her safe arrival, and tell him how the land lay. He on his side could quite endure till the Vacation, when he had made up his mind to do something, to have news of her somehow. Even this determination made it more easy for him to defer writing, to make no attempt at communication: for why warn Sir Robert's servants and himself of what he intended to do, so that they might concert means to baulk him? whereas it was so very doubtful whether anything he sent would reach Lily. Thus he reasoned with himself, with always the refrain that a year or two of waiting at his own age and Lily's, could do no one any harm.

Yet Ronald was but mortal, though he was so wise. Sir Robert left Edinburgh, going to pay his round of visits before he went abroad, which he invariably did every autumn. There was no

Monte Carlo in those days, and old gentlemen had not acquired the habit of sunning themselves on the Riviera; but on the other hand there was much more to attract them at the German Baths, which had many of the attractions now concentrated at Monte Carlo; and Florence possessed a Court and society where life went on in that round of entertainment and congregation which is essential to old persons of the world. Sir Robert disappeared some time before the circles of the Parliament House broke up, and young Lumsden was thus freed from the disagreeable consciousness of being more or less under the personal observation of his enemy. And he loved Lily, though he was willing to wait and to be temporarily separated from her in the interests of their future comfort and Sir Robert's fortune. So that, when he was released from his work and free to direct his movements for a time as he pleased, an attraction which he could not resist led him to the place of his lady's exile. All the good reasons which his ever-working mind brought forth against this were, I am happy to say, ineffectual. He said to himself that it was a foolish thing; that if reported to Sir Robert—and how could it fail to be reported to Sir Robert since his servants were so faithful, and it would be impossible to keep them in the dark?—would only precipitate everything and lead to Lily's transfer to a safer hiding-place. He repeated to himself that to wait for a year or two, at twenty-two and at twenty-eight, was no real hardship: it was rather an advantage. But none of these wise considerations affected his mind as they ought to have done. He had a hunger and thirst upon him to see the girl he loved. He wanted to make sure that she was there: that there was a Lily in the world: that eventually she would be his and share his life. It was *plus fort que lui*.

He went home, however, as in duty bound, to the spare old house, on the edge of the Highlands, where he and all his brothers and sisters had been born and bred; where there was a little shooting—soon exhausted by reason of the many guns brought to bear upon it: and a good deal of company in a homely way—inpromptu dances almost every night, as is the fashion in a large family, which attracts young people round it far and near. But in all this simple jollity Ronald only felt more the absence of his love, and the vacant place in the world which could only be



filled by her : though what, perhaps, had as great an effect upon him as anything else was that his favourite sister—whom, next to her, perhaps he liked best in the world—knew about Lily, having been taken into his confidence before he had realised all the difficulties, and talked to him perpetually about her, disapproving of his inactivity and much compassionating the lonely girl. “Oh, if I were only near enough I would go and see her and keep up her heart!” Janet Lumsden would cry, while her brother was fast getting into the condition of mind in which to see her, to make sure of her existence, was a necessity. In this condition the old house at home, with all its simple gaieties and tumult, became intolerable to him. He could have kicked the brother who demanded his sympathy in his engagement to a young lady with a fortune—neither the young lady nor the fortune being worthy to be compared to Lily—though the family was delighted by such a piece of good luck for Rob. And it set all his nerves wrong to see the flirtations that went on around him, though they were frank and simple affairs, the inevitable preferences which one boy and girl among so many would naturally show for each other. All this seemed vulgar, common, intolerable, and in the worst taste to Ronald. It was not that he was really more refined than his brothers, but that his own affairs had gone (temporarily) so wrong, and his own chosen was so far out of the way. All the jolly, hearty family life at home jarred on him and upset his nerves—those artificial things which did not exist in Perthshire at that period, whatever they may do now.

At last, when he could not endure it any longer, he announced that he was going a-fishing up towards the North. He was not a great fisherman, and the brothers laughed at Ronald setting out with his rod : but he had the natural gift, common to all Scotsmen of good blood, of knowing most people throughout his native country, or at least one part of his native country, and being sure of a welcome in a hundred houses in which a son of Lumsden of Pontalloch was a known and recognisable person, though Lumsden of Pontalloch himself was by no means a rich or important man. This is an advantage which the *roturier* never acquires until at least he has passed through three or four generations. Ronald Lumsden knew that he would never be at a loss : that if rejected

in one city he could flee into another : and that if any impertinent questions were put to him by Sir Robert's own faithful servants, he could always say that he was going to stay at any of the known houses within twenty miles. This hospitality perhaps exists no longer, for many of these houses now—probably the greater part of them—are let to strangers and foreigners, to whom even the native names are strange, and the tradition of the country means nothing. But it was so still in those days.

He set out thus, more or less at his ease, and lingered a little on his way. Then he thought himself, or so he said, of the Rugas, in which he had fished once as a boy, and which justified him in getting off the coach at the little inn—not much better than a village public-house—where a bare room and a hard bed were to be had, and a right to fish could be negotiated for. He had a day's fishing to give himself a countenance, inquiring into the history generally of the country, and which houses were occupied, and which lairds “up for the shooting.”

“Sir Robert here? na, Sir Robert's not here. Bless us a', what would bring him here, an auld man like that, that just adores his creature comforts, and never touches a gun, good season or bad. No, he's no here, nor he hasna been here this dozen years. But I'll tell you wha's here, and that's a greater ferlie—his bonnie wee niece, Maister James's daughter, Miss Lily, as they call her. And it's no for the shooting, there's nae need to say, nor for the fishing either, poor bit thing. But what it is for is more than I can tell ye. It's just a black, burning shame——”

“Why is it a shame? Is the house haunted, or what's the matter?” Ronald said, averting his face.

“Haunted! that's a pack of havers. I'm not minding about haunted. But I tell ye what, sir, that bit lassie (and a bonnie bit lassie she is) is all her lane there, like a lily flower in the wilderness : for Lily she's called, and Lily she is—a bit willowy slender creature, bowing her head like a flower on the stalk.” The landlord, who was short, and red, and stout, leaned his own head to one side to simulate the young lady's attitude. “She's there and never sees a single soul, and it's mair than her life's worth, if ye take my opinion. If there was anybody to keep her company, or even a lot of sportsmen coming and going, it would be some thing : but there she is, all her lane.”



"Miss Ramsay! I have met her in Edinburgh," Ronald said.

"Then, if I were you, I would just take my foot in my hand and gang ower the moor and pay her a visit. She will have a grand tocher, and she is a bonnie lass, and now-a-days ye canna pick up an heiress at every roadside. It would be just a charity to give the poor thing a little diversion and make a fool o' yon old sneck-drawer to his very beard. Lord! but I wouldna waste a meenit if I were a young man."

Ronald laughed, but put on a virtuous mien. He said he had come for the fishing, not to pay visits, and to the fishing he would go. But when he had spent the morning on the river it occurred to him that he might take "a look at the moor:" and this was how it was that he stole under the shadow of the bank when the last rays of the sunset were fading, and suddenly came out upon the heather under Dalrugas Tower.

## CHAPTER X.

LILY could not believe her eyes: that it was Ronald who approached the house, leaping over the big bushes of ling, seeking none of the little paths that ran here and there across the moor, did not occur to her. She was afraid that it was some stranger or traveller, probably an Englishman, who seeing a woman's head at a window, thought it an appropriate occasion for impertinently attempting to attract her attention. It was considered in those days that Englishmen and wanderers unknown in the district were disposed to be jocularly uncivil when they had a chance, and indeed the excellent Beenie, who had but few personal attractions, had rarely gone out alone in Edinburgh, as Lily had often been told, without being followed by some adventurous person eager to make her acquaintance. Lily's first thought was that here must be one of Beenie's many anonymous admirers, and after having watched breathlessly up to a certain point, she withdrew with a sense of offence, somewhat haughtily surprised that she, even at this height and distance, could be taken for Beenie, or that any such methods should be adopted to approach herself. But her heart had begun to beat, she knew not why, and after a few minutes' interval, she returned cautiously to the window. She did not see any one at first, and with a sigh of

relief but disappointment said to herself that it was nobody, not even a lover of Beenie who might have furnished her with a laugh, but only some passer-by pursuing his indifferent way. Then she ventured to put out her head to see where the passing figure had gone: and lo, at the foot of the tower, immediately below the window, stood he whom she believed to be so far away. There was a mutual cry of "Ronald" and "Lily," and then he cried "hush, hush" in a thrilling whisper and begged her to come out, "only for a moment, only for a word," he cried through the pale air of the twilight. "Has anything happened?" cried Lily bewildered. She had no habit of the clandestine. She forgot that there was any sentence against their meeting, and felt only that when he did not come to her, but called to her to go to him, there must be something wrong.

But presently the sense of the position came back to her. Dougal and Katrin had given no sign of consciousness that any restraint was to be exercised—they had not opposed any desire of hers, or attempted to prevent her from going out as she pleased: therefore the thought that they were now themselves at supper and fully occupied, though it came into her mind, did not affect her, nor did she feel it necessary to whisper back in return. But he beckoned so eagerly that Lily yielded to his urgency. She ran downstairs, catching up a plaid as she went, and in a moment was on the moor and by Ronald's side. "At last," he said, "at last!" when the first emotion of the meeting was over.

"Oh it is me that should say at last," said the girl "it is not you that have been alone for weeks and weeks, banished from everything you know—not a kent face, not a kind word, and not a letter by the post."

"I gave a promise I would not write. Indeed I wanted to give them no handle against us, but to come the first moment I could without exciting suspicion."

"You are very feared of exciting suspicion," she said, shaking her head.

"Have I not cause? Your uncle upbraided me that I was taking advantage of your inexperience—persuading you to do things you would repent after. Can I do this, Lily? Can I lay myself open to such a reproach? Indeed, I do know the facts of things better than you."

"I don't know what you call the facts of things," she said. "Do you know the facts of this, the moor and nothing but the moor, and the two-three servants, and the beasts? Could you contrive to get your diversion out of the ways of a pony, and the cackle of the cocks and hens? Not but they are very diverting sometimes," said Lily, her heart rising. She was impatient with him. She was even angry with him. He it was who was to blame for her banishment, and he had been long, long in doing anything to enliven it: but still he was here, and the world was changed. Her heart rose instinctively—even while she complained the things she complained of grew attractive in her eyes. The pony's humours brought smiles to her face, the moor grew fair, the diversion which she had almost resented when it was all she had, now appeared to her in a happy glow of amusement: though she was complaining in this same breath of the colourlessness of her life, it now seemed to her colourless no more.

He drew her arm more closely through his. "And do you think I had more diversion?" he asked, "feeling every street a desert and my rooms more vacant than the moor? But that's over, my Lily, heaven be praised. I'm thought to be fishing, and fish I will, hereaway and thereaway to give myself a countenance, but always within reach. And the moor will be paradise when you and I meet here every day."

"Oh Ronald—if we can keep it up," Lily murmured in spite of herself.

"Why shouldn't we keep it up—as long at least as the Vacation lasts? After that, it is true, I'll have to go back to work: but it is a long time before that—and I will go back with a light heart to do my best, to make it possible to carry you off one day and laugh at Sir Robert, for that is what it must come to, Lily. You may have objections, but you must learn to get over them. If he stands out and will not give in to us, we must just take it in our own hands. It must come to that. I would not hurry or press a thing so displeasing if other means will do. And in the meantime we'll be very patient and try to get over your uncle by fair means. But if he is obstinate, dear, that's what it will have to come to. No need to hurry you, we're young enough. But you must prepare your mind for it, Lily—for that is what will have to come if he does not give way."

Lily clung to her lover's arm in a bewilderment of pleasure, which was yet confusion of thought, as if the world had suddenly turned upside down. This was her own sentiment, which Ronald had never shared: how in a moment had it become his, changing everything, making the present delightful and the future all hope and light? Sir Robert's fortune had then begun to appear to him what it had been to her, so secondary a matter! and Sir Robert himself only a relative worthy of consideration and deference, but not a tyrant obstructing all the developments of life. She could not say: "This is how I have felt all through," for indeed it had never been possible to her to say to him: "Take me, let us live poorly, but together," as she had always felt. Was it he who had felt this all through and not she at all? Lily was bewildered, her standing-ground seemed to have changed, the whole position was transformed. Surely it must have been she who held back, who wanted to delay and temporise, not the lover to whom the bolder way was more natural. She did not seem to feel the ground beneath her, all had so twisted and changed. "That is what it must come to, you must prepare your mind for it, Lily." Had that solid ground been cut from under her, was she walking upon air? Her head felt a little giddy and sick in the change of the world: yet what a change! all blessedness and happiness and consolation with no trouble in it at all.

"I have thought so sometimes myself," she said in the great bewilderment of her mind.

"But in the meantime we must be patient a little," he said. "Of course I am going to take my Vacation here where we can be together. What kind of people are those servants? Do they send him word about everything and spy upon all your movements? Never mind, I'll find a way to baffle them—I am here for the fishing, you know, and after a little while I'll find a lodging nearer, so that we may be the most of the time together whilst pretending to fish. If we keep up in this direction we will be out of the reach of the windows, and you can set Beenie to keep watch and ward. For I suppose you still tell Beenie everything, and she is as faithful to you as Sir Robert's servants are to him?"

"I have no doubt they are faithful," said Lily, a little chilled by this speech, "but they are not spies at all. They never meddle with me. I am

sure they never write to him about what I am doing; besides, Sir Robert is a gentleman, he would never spy upon a girl like me."

"We must not be too sure of that. He sent you here to be spied upon, at least, to be kept out of everybody's sight. I would not trust him nor yet his servants. And I am nearer to you than Sir Robert, Lily. I am your husband that is going to be. It might be wrong for you to meet any other man, which you would never think of doing—but there's nothing wrong in meeting me."

"I never thought so," said Lily, subdued. "I am very very glad to have you here. It will make everything different. Only there is no need to be alarmed about Dougal and Katrin. I think they are fonder of me than of Uncle Robert. They are not hard upon me, they are sorry for me. But never mind about that: will you really, really give up your Vacation and your shooting, and all your pleasure at home, to come here and bide with me?"

"That and a great deal more," said Ronald, fervently. He felt at that moment that he could give everything up for Lily. He was very much pleased, elevated, gratified by what he himself had said. He had taken the burden of the matter on his own shoulders, as it was fit that a man should do. He had felt when they last parted that in some way—he could not exactly say what—he had not come up to what was expected of him. He had not reached the height of Lily's ideal. But now everything was different. He had spoken out, he had assumed a virtue of which he had not been quite sure whether he had it or not; but now he was sure. He would not forsake her—he would never ask her to wait unduly or to suffer for him now. To be sure they would have to wait—they were young enough, there was no harm in that—but not longer than was fit, not to make her suffer. He drew her arm within his, leading her along through the intricacies of the firm turf that formed a green network of softness amid the heather. It was not for her to stumble among the big bushes of ling, or spring over the tufts. His business was to guard her from all that; to lead her by the grassy paths, where her soft footsteps should find no obstacle. There is a moment in a young man's life when he thinks of this mission of his with a certain enthusiasm. Whatever else he might do, this was certainly his, to keep a woman's foot from

stumbling, to smooth the way for her, to find out the easiest road. The more he did it, the more he felt sure that it was his to do, and should be, through all the following years.

Lily was a long time out of doors that night. Robina came upstairs from the lengthened supper, which was one of the pleasantest moments of the day downstairs, when all the work was done, and all were free to talk and linger without any thought of the beasts or the poultry. The cows and the ponies were all suppered and put to bed. All the chickens, mothers and children, had their heads under their wings. The watchfullest of cocks was buried in sleep, the dogs were quiet on the hearthstone. Then was the time for those "cracks," which the little party loved. Beenie told her thrice-told tale, of the wonders of Sir Robert's kitchen, and the goings on of Edinburgh servants, while Katrin gave forth the chronicles of the country side, and Dougal, not to be outdone, poured forth rival recollections of things which he had seen when the Laird's man, following his master afar, and of the tragedy of Mr. James, Lily's father, who had died far from home. They would sometimes talk altogether without observing it, carrying on each in his various strain. And as there was nobody to interrupt, supper-time was long, and full of varied interest. Sandy, the boy, sat at the foot of the table with round and wondering eyes. But though he laid up many an image for future admiration, his interest flagged after a while, and an oft-repeated access of sleep made him the safest of listeners. "G'y way to your bed, laddie," Katrin would say, not without kindness. "Lord bless us," cried Dougal, giving his kick of dismissal under the table. "D'ye no hear what the mistress tells ye?" But this was the only thing that disturbed the little party. And Beenie usually came upstairs to find Lily with her pale face, she who had no cronies, nor any one with whom to forget herself in talk, "wearying" for her sole attendant.

But on this night Beenie found no one there when she came upstairs, running, and a little guilty to think of the solitude of her little mistress. For a moment Beenie had a great throb of terror in her breast—the window was open, a faint and misty moon was shining forlorn over the moor, there were no candles lighted, nor sign of any living thing. Beenie coming in with her light was like

a searcher for some dreadful thing, entering a place of mystery to find she knew not what. She held up her candle and cast a wild glance round the room, as if Lily might have been lying in a heap in some corner—then, with a suppressed scream, rushed into the adjacent bedroom, where the door stood open and all was emptiness. Not there, not there! The distracted woman flew to the open window with a wild apprehension that Lily, in her despair, might have thrown herself over. “Oh, Miss Lily, Miss Lily!” she cried, setting down her light and wringing her hands. Every horrible thing that could have happened rushed through Beenie’s mind. “And what will they say to me, that let her bide her lane and break her heart,” she moaned within herself. And so strong was the certainty in her mind that something dreadful had happened, that when a sound struck her ear and she turned sharp round to see the little mistress—whom she had, in imagination, seen laid out white and still upon her last bed—standing all radiant in life and happiness behind her, the scream which burst forth from Beenie’s lips was wilder than ever. Was it Lily who stood there, smiling and shining, her eyes full of the dew of light, and every line of her countenance beaming? or was it rather Lily’s glorified ghost, the spirit that had overcome all troubles of the flesh? It was the mischievous look in Lily’s eyes that convinced her faithful servant that this last hypothesis could not be the explanation. For mischief surely will not shine in glorified eyes, or the blessed amuse themselves with the consternation of mortals. And Beenie’s soul, so suddenly relieved of its terrors, burst out in an “Oh, Miss Lily!” the perennial remonstrance with which the elder woman had all her life protested against, yet condoned and permitted the wayward humours of the girl.

“Well, Beenie! and how long do you think you will take to your supper another time?” Lily said.

“Oh, Miss Lily, and where have you been? I’ve had a fright that will make me need no more suppers as long as I live. Supper did ye say? Me that thought that you were out of the window, lying cauld and stark at the foot of the Tower. Oh, my bonnie dear, my heart’s beating like a muckle drum. Where have ye been?”

“I have been on the moor,” said Lily, dreamily. “I’ve had a fine walk, half the way to the town,

while you have been taken up with your bannocks and your cheese, and your cracks. I had a great mind to come round to the window and put something white over my head and give you a good fright, sitting there telling stories and thinking nothing of me.”

“Eh, I wasna telling stories, no me!”

Why Beenie made this asseveration I cannot tell; for she did nothing but tell stories all the time that Dougal, Katrin and she were together—but it was natural to deny instinctively whatever accusation of neglect was brought against her. “And eh,” she cried, with natural art, turning the tables, “what a time of night to be out on that weary moor, a young lady like you. Your feet will be wet with the dew, and no a thing upon your shoulders to keep you from the cold. Eh, Miss Lily, Miss Lily!” cried Robina, with all the fictitious indignation of a counter-accusation, “them that has to look after you and keep you out of mischief has hard ado.”

“Perhaps you will get me a little supper, now that you have had plenty for yourself,” said Lily, keeping up the advantage on her side. But she was another Lily from that pale flower which had looked so sadly over the moor before Robina went downstairs to her prolonged meal—a radiant creature with joy in every movement. What could it be that had happened to Lily while her faithful woman was downstairs?

## CHAPTER XI.

LILY kept the secret to herself as long as it was in mortal power to do so. She sent Beenie off to bed, entirely mystified and unable to explain to herself the transformation which had taken place, while she herself lay down under the canopies of the “best bed” and watched the misty moonlight on the moor, and pictured to herself that Ronald would be only now arriving, after his long walk, at his homely lodging. But what did it matter to him to be late, to walk so far, to traverse, mile after mile in the dark, that lonesome road? He was a man, and it was right and fit for him. If he had been walking half the night, it would have been just what the rural lads do—proud of their sweet-hearts, for whom they sacrifice half their rest.

“I’ll take my plaid and out I’ll steal,  
And o’er the hills to Nannie O.”

That was the sentiment for the man, and Lily felt her heart swell with the pride of it and the satisfaction. She had thought—had she really thought it?—that he was too careful, too prudent, more concerned about her fortune than her happiness—but how false that had all been! or how different he was now! “To carry you off some day and laugh at Sir Robert—for that is what it must come to, Lily.” Ah, she had always known that this was what it must come to: but he had not seen it, or at least she had thought he did not see it in the Edinburgh days. He had learnt it, however, since then, or else—which was most likely—it had always been in him, only mistaken by her or undeveloped: for it takes some time, she said to herself, before a man like Ronald, full of faith in his fellow-creatures, could believe in a tyranny like Sir Robert's, or think that it was anything but momentary. To think that the heartless old man should send a girl here, and then go away and probably forget all about her, leaving her to pine away in the wilderness—that was a thing that never would have entered into Ronald's young and wholesome mind. But now he saw it all, and that passiveness which had chilled and disappointed Lily was gone. That was what it must come to. Ah yes, it was this it must come to—*independence*, no waiting on an old man's caprices, no dreadful calculations about a fortune which was not theirs, which Lily did not grudge Sir Robert, which she was willing, contemptuously, that he should do what he pleased with, which she would never buy at the cost of the happiness of her young life. And now Ronald thought so too. The little flat high up under the tiles of a tall old Edinburgh house began to appear again, looming in the air over the wild moor. What a home it would be, what a nest of love and happiness! Ronald never should repent, oh, never, never should he repent that he had chosen Lily's love rather than Sir Robert's fortune. How happy they would be, looking out over all the lights and shadows with the great town at their feet, and all their friends around! Lily fell asleep in this beatitude of thought, and in the same awakened, wondering at herself for one moment why she should feel so happy, and then remembering with a rush of delightful retrospection. Was it possible that all the world had thus changed in a moment, that the clouds had all

fled away, that these moors were no longer the wilderness, but a little outlying land of paradise, where happiness was, and everything that was good was yet to be?

Beenie found her young mistress radiant in the morning as she had left her radiant when she went to bed. The girl's young countenance could not contain her smiles—they seemed to ripple over, to mingle with the light, to make sunshine where there was none. What could have happened to her in that social hour when Robina was at supper with her friends—usually one of the duller of the twenty-four to lonely Lily? Whom could she have seen, what could she have heard, to light those lamps of happiness in her eyes? But Robina could not divine what it was, and Lily laughed and flouted, and reproached her with smiles always running over. “You were so busy with your supper, you never looked what might be happening to me. You and Katrin and Dougal were so full of your cracks, you had no eyes for a poor lassie. I might have been lost upon the moor and you would never have found it out. But I was not lost, you see, only wonderfully diverted and spent a happy evening, and you never knew.”

“Miss Lily,” said Beenie, with tears, “never more, if I should starve, will I go down to my supper again!”

“You will just go down to your supper to-night and every night, and have your cracks with Dougal and Katrin, and be as happy as you can: for I am happy too. I am lonely no more. I am just the Lily I used to be before trouble came—oh, better! for it's finer to be happy again after trouble than when you are just innocent and never have learnt what it is.”

“The Lord bless us all,” cried Beenie solemnly, “the bairn speaks as if she had gone, like Eve, into the thickest of the gairden and eaten of the tree——”

“So I have,” said Lily. “I once was just happy like the bairn you call me, and then I was miserable. And now I know the difference: for I'm happy again, and so I will always be.”

“Oh, Miss Lily,” said Beenie, “to say you will always be is just flying in the face of providence—for there is nobody in this world that is always happy. We would be mair than mortal if we could be sure of that.”

"But I am sure of it," said Lily, "for what made me miserable was just misjudging a person. I thought I understood, and I didn't understand. And now I do : and if I were to live to a hundred I would never make that mistake again. And it lies at the bottom of everything. I may be ill, I may be poor, I may have other troubles : but I can never, never," said Lily, placing piously her hands together, "have that unhappiness which is the one that gives bitterness to all the rest—again."

"My bonnie lady ! I wish I knew what you were meaning," Beenie said.

Lily kept her hands clasped and her head raised a little, as if she were saying a prayer. And then she turned with a graver countenance to her wondering maid. "Do you think," she said, "that Dougal or Katrin—but I don't think Katrin—write to Uncle Robert and tell him everything I do?"

"Dougal or Katrin—write to Sir Robert? But what would they do that for?" said Beenie, with wide open eyes.

"Well, I don't know—yes, I do know. I know what has been said, but I don't believe it. They say that Sir Robert's servants write everything to him and tell all I do."

"You do nothing, Miss Lily. What should they write? What do they ken? They ken nothing. Miss Lily, Sir Robert, he's a gentleman. Do you think he would set a watch on a bit young creature like you? He may be a hard man, and no considerate, but he is not a man like that."

"That's what I said," cried Lily—"but tell me one thing more. Do they know—did he tell them why—what for he sent me here?"

A blush and a cloud came over her sensitive face—and then a smile broke forth like the sunshine, and chased the momentary trouble away.

"Not a word, Miss Lily, not a word. Was he likely to expose himself and you, that are his nearest kin? No such thing. Many, many a wonder they have taken, and many a time they have tried to get it out of me : but I say it was just because of having no fit home for a young lady, and him aye going away to take his waters, and to play himself at divers places that were not fit for the like of you. They dinna just believe me, but they just give each other a bit look and never say a word. And it's my opinion, Miss Lily, that they're just far fonder of you, Mr. James's daughter,

than they are of Sir Robert : for Dougal was Mr. James's ain man ; and to betray you to your uncle, even if there was anything to tell—which there is not, and I'm hoping never will be—is what they would not do. You said yourself you did not believe that Katrin would ever tell upon you : and I'm just as sure of Dougal, that is very fond of you, though he mayna show it. And then there's the grand security of a', Miss Lily, that there is nothing to tell."

"To be sure, that is, as you say, the grand security of all." Then Lily's face burst into smiles, and she flung discretion to the winds. "Beenie," she said, "you would never guess. I was very lonely at the window last night, wondering and wondering if I would just bide there all my life, and never see anybody coming over the moor, when, in a moment, I saw somebody ! He was standing among the heather at the foot of the tower.—"

"Miss Lily !"

"Just so," said the girl nodding her head in the delight of her heart, "It was just—him. When everything was at the darkest, and my heart was broken—Oh Beenie ! and it's quite different from what I thought. I thought he was more for saving Uncle Robert's fortune than for making me happy. I was just a fool for my pains. 'If he stands out we must just take it in our own hands—it must come to that, you must just prepare your mind for it, Lily.' That was what he said—and me misjudging and making myself miserable all the time. That is why I say I will never be miserable again, for I will misjudge Ronald no more."

"Eh, Miss Lily !" Beenie said again. Her mind was in a confusion even greater than that of her young mistress ; and she did not know what to say. If Lily had misjudged him, so had she—and worse, and worse, she said to herself ! Beenie had not been made miserable, however, by the mistake as Lily had been, and she was not uplifted by the discovery—if it was a discovery—a cold doubt still hovered about her heart.

"I will tell you the truth. I will not hide anything from you," said Lily. "He is at Kinloch Rugas, he is staying in the very town itself. He has come here for the fishing. He'll maybe not catch many fish, but we'll both be happy, which is of more importance. Be as long as you like at your supper, Beenie, for then I will slip out and

take my walk upon the moor, and Dougal and Katrin need never know anything except that I am as they think already, a silly lassie keeping daft-like hours. If they write that to Uncle Robert what will it matter? To go out on the moor at the sunset is not silly, it is the right thing to do. And the weather is just like heaven, you know it is, one day rising after another, and never a cloud."

"Deed there are plenty of clouds," said Beenie, "and soon we'll have rain, and you cannot wander upon the moor then, not if he were the finest man in all the world."

"We'll wait till that time comes, and then we'll think what's best to do: but at present it is just the loveliest weather that ever was seen. Look at that sky," said Lily, pointing to the vault of heavenly blue which, indeed, was not cloudless but better, flushed with beatific specks of white like the wings of angels. And then the girl sprang out of bed and threw herself into Robina's arms. "Oh, I've been faithless, faithless," she cried, "I've thought nothing but harm and ill. And I was mistaken, mistaken all the time! I could hide my face in the dust for shame, and then I could lift it up to the skies for joy. For there's nothing matters in this world so long as them you care for are good and true, and care for you. Nothing, nothing, whether it's wealth or poverty, whether it's parting or meeting. I thought he was thinking more of the siller than of true love. The more shame to me in my ignorance, the silly, silly thing I was. And all the time it was just the contrary, and true love was what he was thinking of, though it was only for an unworthy creature like me."

"I wouldna be so humble as that, my bonnie dear. Ye are nane unworthy, you're one that any person might be proud of to have for their ain. I'm saying nothing against Mr. Ronald, wha is a fine young man and just suits ye very well if everything was according. Weel, weel, you need not take off my head. Ye can say what you like, but he would just be very suitable if he had a little more siller or a little more heart. Oh, I am not undoubting his heart in that kind of a way. He's fond enough of you, I make no doubt of that. It's courage is what he wants, and the heart to take things into his own hands."

"Beenie," said the young mistress with dignity, "when the like of you takes a stupid fit, there is nothing like your stupidity. Oh! it's worse than

that—it is a determination not to understand, that takes the patience out of one. But I will not argue: I might have held my tongue and kept it all to myself, but I would not, for I've got a bad habit of telling you everything. Ah! it's a very bad habit, when you set yourself like a stone wall, and refuse to understand. Go away now, you dull woman, and leave me alone: and if you like to betray me and him to those folk in the kitchen you will just have to do it, for I cannot stop you: but it will be the death of me."

"I betray you!" said Beenie with such a tone of injured feeling as all Lily's caresses, suddenly bestowed in a flood, could not calm; but peace was made after a while, and Robina went forth to the world as represented by Katrin and Dougal with an increase of dignity and self-importance which these simple people could not understand. "Bless me, you will have been hearing some grand news or other," said Katrin.

"Me! how could I hear any news good or bad, and me the same as in prison?" said Beenie: upon which both her companions burst into derisive laughter.

"An easy prison," said Katrin, "where you can come and gang at your pleasure and nobody to say, where are ye gaun?"

"You're on your parole, Beenie," said Dougal, "like one of the officers in the time of the war."

"That is just it," said Robina, "you never said a truer word. I'm just on my parole. I can go where I please but no go away. And I can do what I please but no what I want to do. That's harder than stone walls and iron bars."

"But what can ye be wanting to do sae out of the ordinary?" said Katrin. "Me, I thought we were such good friends just living very peaceable: and you content, Beenie, more or less—as weel as a middle-aged woman with nothing happening to her is like to be."

"I wasna consulting you about my age or what I expected," Beenie replied with quick indignation. It was a taunt that made the tears steal to her eyes. If Katrin thought it was such a great thing to be married and that she, Robina, had not had her chance like another! But she drew herself up and added grandly, "It is my young lady that is in prison, poor thing, shut out from all her own kind. And how do I ken that you two are not just two-

gaolers over her, keeping the poor thing fast that she should never make a step, nor see a face, but what Sir Robert would have to know."

The two guardians of Dalrugas consulted each other with a glance. "Oh, is that hit?" said Katrin. It is seldom, very seldom, that a Scotch speaker makes any havoc with the letter *h*, but there is an occasional exception to this rule for the sake of emphasis, "Is that hit" is a stronger expression than "Is that it." It isolates the pronoun and gives it force. Dougal for his part pushed his cap off his head till it hung on by one hair. It had been Robina's object to keep them in the dark; but her attempt was not successful. It diverted rather a stream of light upon a point which they had not yet taken into consideration at all. Many had been the wonderings at first over Lily's arrival, and Sir Robert's reason for sending her here, but no guidance had been afforded to the curious couple and their speculations had died a natural death. But Robina's unguarded speech woke again all the echoes. "It will just be a lad, after a'," Katrin said to her spouse, when Robina, perceiving her mistake, retired. "I wouldna say but what it was," answered Dougal. "And eh, man," said his wife, "you and me that just stable our beasts real peaceable together, would not be the ones to make any outcry if it was a bonnie lad and one that was well meaning." "If the lad's bonnie or not is naething to you or me," said the husband.

"I'm no speaking of features, you coof, and that ye ken weel; but one that means weel and would take the poor bit motherless lassie to a hame of her ain: eh, Dougal man!" said Katrin with the moisture in her eyes. "How do we ken," said Dougal, "if there is a lad—which is no way proved, but weemen's thoughts are aye upon that kind of thing—that he is no just after Sir Robert's fortune, and thinking very little of the bonnie lass herself?" "Eh, but men are ill-thinking creatures," said Katrin, "ye ken by yourselves and mind all the worldly meanings ye had when a poor lass was thinking but of love and kindness. And what for should the gentleman be thinking of Sir Robert's fortune? He has, maybe, as good a one of his ain." "No likely," said Dougal, shaking his head. But he added, "I'll no play false to Maister James's daughter, whatever—and you'll no let me hear any

clashes out of your head," he said, with magisterial action striding away. "When it was me that was standing up for her a' the time!" Katrin cried with an indignation that was not without justice.

## CHAPTER XII.

NEXT night the supper was much prolonged in the kitchen at Dalrugas. The three *convives*—for Sandy tumbled off to sleep and was hustled off to bed at an early hour—told stories against each other with devotion: Katrin adding notes and elucidations to every anecdote slowly worked out by her husband, and meeting every wonder of Beenie's by a more extraordinary tale. But while they thus occupied themselves with a strong intention and meaning that Lily's freedom should be complete, the thrill of consciousness about all three was unmistakable. How it came about that they knew this to be the moment when Lily desired to be unwatched and free, neither Dougal nor Katrin could have told. Lily had been roaming about the moor for a great part of the day, sometimes with Beenie, sometimes alone; but they had taken no more notice than usual. Perhaps they thought of the country custom which brings the wooer at nightfall: perhaps something magnetic was in the air. At all events this was the effect produced. They sat down in the early twilight, which had not yet quite lost its prolonged midsummer sweetness, and the moon was shining, whitening the great breadth of the moor, before they rose. They had neither heard nor seen anything of Lily on the previous evening, though she had gone out with more haste and less precaution than now; but her movements to-night seemed to send the thrill of a pulse beating all through the gaunt, high house. Each of them heard her flit downstairs, though her step was so light. The husband and wife gave each other a glance when they heard the sound, though it was no more than the softest touch, of the big hall door as she drew it behind her; and Beenie raised her voice instinctively to drown the noise, as if it had been something loud and violent. They all thought they heard her step upon the grass, which was impossible, and the sound of another step meeting hers. They were all conscious to their finger-tips of what poor little Lily was about, or what they thought she was about: though, indeed,



Lily had flown forth like a dove, making no noise at all, even in her own excited ears.

And as for any sound of their steps upon the mossy greenness of the grass that intersected the heather, and made so soft a background for the big hummocks of the ling, there was no such thing that any but fairy ears could have heard. Ronald was standing in the same place, at the foot of the tower, when Lily flew out noiseless, with the plaid over her arm. He had brought a basket of fish, which he placed softly within the hall door.

"You see I am not, after all, a fisher for nothing," he whispered, as he put the soft plaid about her shoulders.

"Whisht! don't say anything," said Lily, "till we are further off the house."

"You don't trust them, then?" he said.

"Oh, I trust them! but it's a little dreadful to think one has to trust anybody and to be afraid of what a servant will say."

"So it is," he agreed, "but that is one of the minor evils we must just put up with, Lily. We would not if we could help it. Still, when your uncle compels you and me to proceedings like this, he must bear the guilt of it—if there is any guilt."

"'Guilt' is a big word," said Lily; and then she added, "I suppose it is what a great many do, and think no shame."

"Shame!" he said, "for two lovers to meet that are kept apart for no reason in the world! If we were to meet Sir Robert face to face I hope my Lily would not blush, and certainly there would be no shame in me. He dared us to it when he sent you away, and I don't see how he can expect anything different. I would be a poor creature if, when I was free myself, I let my bonnie Lily droop alone."

"A poor Lily you would have found me if it had lasted much longer," she said, "but oh! Ronald, never think of that now. Here we are together, and we believe in each other, which is all we want. To doubt, that is the dreadful thing—to think that perhaps there are other thoughts not like your own in his mind: and that however you may meet, and however near you may be, you never know what he may be thinking." Lily shuddered a little, notwithstanding that he had put the plaid so closely round her, and that her arm was within his.

"Yes," said Ronald, "and don't you think there might be the same dread in him? that his Lily was doubting him—not trusting—perhaps turning away to other—"

"Don't say that, Ronald, for it is not possible. You could not ever have doubted me. Don't say that, or I'll never speak to you again."

"And why not I as well as you?" said Ronald. "There is just as much occasion. I believe there is no occasion, Lily. Don't mistake me again—but just as much occasion."

She looked at him for a moment with her face changing, as he repeated: "Just as much occasion." And then, with a happy sigh: "Which is none," she said.

"On either side. The one the same as the other. Promise me you will always keep to that, and never change your mind."

She only smiled in reply—words did not seem necessary. They understood each other without any such foolish formula. And how was it possible she should change her mind? how ever go beyond that moment, which was eternity, which held all time within the bliss of its content? The entreaty to keep to that seemed to Lily to be without meaning. This was always; this was for ever. Her mind could no more change than the great blue peak of Schecallion could change, standing up against the lovely evening sky. She had recognised her mistake, with what pride and joy! and that was over for ever. It was a chapter never to be opened again.

The lingering sunset died over the moor, with every shade of colour that the imagination could conceive. The heather flamed now pink, now rose, now crimson, now purple; little clouds of light detached themselves from the pageant of the sunset and floated all over the blue, like rose leaves scattered and floating on a heavenly breeze; the air over the hills thrilled with a vibration more delicate than that of the heat, but in a similar confusion, like water, above the blue edges of the mountains. Then the evening slowly dimmed, the colours going out upon the moor, tint by tint, though they still lingered in the sky; then in the east, which had grown grey and wistful, came up all at once the white glory of the moon. It was such an evening as only belongs to the North. An enchanted hour, neither night nor day, bound by no vulgar conditions, lasting for ever, like Lily's.

mood, no limits or boundaries to it, floating in infinite vastness and stillness, between heaven and earth. The two who, being together, perfected this spotless period, wandered over all the moor, not thinking where they were going, winding out and in among the bushes of the heather, wherever the spongy turf would bear a footstep. They forgot that they were afraid of being seen: but indeed there was nobody to see them, not a soul on the high road nor on the moor. They forgot all chances of betrayal, all doubts about Sir Robert's servants—everything indeed, except that they were together and had a thousand things to say to each other, or nothing at all to say to each other, as happened, the silence being as sweet as the talk, and the pair changing from one to the other as caprice dictated: now all still breathing like one being, now garrulous as the morning birds. They forgot themselves so far that, after two or three false partings, Ronald taking Lily home, then Lily accompanying Ronald back again to the edge of the moor, he walked with her at last to the very foot of the Tower, from whence he had first called her, though there were audible voices just round the corner, clearly denoting that the other inmates were taking a breath of air after their supper, at the ha' door. There was almost a pleasure in the risk, in coming close up to those bystanders, yet unseen and whispering the last good night almost within reach of their ears.

"I do not see why I should carry on the farce of fishing all day long," said Ronald, "and see you only in the evening. You can get out as easily in the afternoon as in the evening, Lily."

"Oh yes, quite as easy. Nobody minds me where I go."

"Then come down to the waterside. It is not too far for you to walk. I will be by way of fishing up the stream; and I will bring my lunch in my pocket and we will have a little picnic together, you and me."

"I will do that, Ronald; but the evening is the bonnie time. The afternoon is just vulgar day, and this is the enchanted time. It is all poetry now."

"It is you that are the poetry, Lily. Me, I'm only common flesh and blood."

"It is the two of us that make the poetry," said Lily, "but the afternoon will be fine, too, and I will come. I will allow you to catch no fish—little

bonnie things, why should they not be happy in the water, like us on the bank?"

"I like very well to see them in the basket, and to feel I have been so clever as to catch them," said Ronald.

"And so do I," cried Lily, with a laugh so frank that they were both startled into silence, feeling that the audience round the corner had stopped their talk to listen. This—the reader will see not all protestations, not all sighs of sentiment—was the manner of their talk before they finally parted, Ronald making a long circuit so as to emerge unseen and lower down upon the high road, on the other side of the moor. Was it necessary to make any such make believe? Lily walked round the corner, with a blush yet a smile, holding her head high, looking her possible critics in the face. It was Dougal and Katrin, who had come out of doors to breathe the air after their supper, and to see the bonnie moor. Within, in the shadow of the stairs, was a vision of Beenie, very nervous, her eyes round and shining with eagerness and suspense. Lily coming in view—all radiant in the glory of her youth, full of happiness, full of life, too completely inspired and lighted up with the occasion to take any precautions of concealment—was like a revelation. She was youth and joy and love impersonified, coming out upon the lower level of common life, which was all these good people knew, like a star out of the sky. Katrin, arrested in the question on her lips, gazed at her with a woman's ready perception of the new and wonderful atmosphere about her. Dougal, half as much impressed, but not knowing why, pushed his cap on one side as usual, inserting an interrogative finger among the masses of his grizzled hair.

"So you've been taking your walk, Miss Lily," said Katrin, subdued out of the greater vigour of remark which she had been about to use.

"Yes, Katrin, while you have been having your supper. Your voices sound very nice downstairs when you are having your cracks, but they make me feel all the more lonely by myself. It's more company on the moor," Lily said, with an irrestrainable laugh. She meant, I suppose, to deceive—that is, she had no desire to betray herself to those people who might betray her—but she was so unused to any kind of falsehood, that she brought out her ambiguous phrase so as to make it imply, if not express the truth.

"I am glad you should find it company, Miss Lily. It's awfu' bonnie and fresh and full of fine smells—the gale under your foot and the wholesome heather, and a' thae bonnie little flowers."

"Losh me! I would find them puir company for my part," said Dougal, "but there is, maybe—"

"Hold your peace, you coof. Do ye think the like of you can faddom a young leddy that is just close kin to everything that's bonnie? You, an auld gillie, a Highland tyke, a—"

"Don't abuse Dougal—though you have paid me the prettiest compliment. Could I have the powny to-morrow, Dougal, to go down the water a bit? and I will take a piece with me, Katrin, in case I should be late: and then you need never fash your heads about me whether I come in to dinner or not."

"My bonnie leddy, I like everybody to come in to their dinner," said Katrin, with a cloud upon her face.

"So do I, in a usual way. But I have been here a long time—how long, Beenie? A whole month, fancy that! and they tell me there is a very bonnie glen down by the old bridge that people go to see."

"So there is, a real bonnie bit. I'll take ye there some day mysel': and Beenie, she can come in the cairt with the black powney gin she likes. She'll mind it well—a' the bairns are keen to gang in the vacance to the Fairy Glen."

"I'll not wait for Beenie this time, or you either, Dougal," said Lily, again with a laugh. "I will just take Rory for my guide and find it out for myself. I think," she added, with a deeper blush and a faltering voice, "that Miss Helen, from the Manse—"

She did not get far enough to tell that faltering fib. "Oh, if you are to be with Miss Eelen! Miss Eelen knows every corner of the Fairy Glen. I will be very easy in my mind," said Katrin, "if Miss Eelen's there: and I'll put up that cold chicken in a basket, and ye shall have a nice lunch as ever two such nice creatures could sit down to. But ye'll mind not to wet your feet, nor climb up the broken arch of the auld brig yonder. Eh, but that's an exploit for a stirring boy, and no a diversion for leddies. And ye'll just give the powny a good feed, and take him out a while in the morning, Dougal, that he mayna be too fresh."

"I'm just thinking," said Dougal, "there's a

dale to do the morn; but if ye were to wait till the day after, I could spare the time, Miss Lily, to take you mysel'."

"And if it's just precesely the morn that Miss Eelen's coming!" cried Katrin, with great and solid effect, while Lily, alarmed, began to explain and deprecate, pleading that she could find the way herself so easily, and would not disturb Dougal for the world. She hurried in after this little episode to avoid any further dangers, to be met by Beenie's round eyes and troubled face in the dark under the stair. "Oh, Miss Lily!" Beenie cried, putting a hand of remonstrance on her arm, which Lily shook off and flew upstairs, very happy, it must be allowed, in her first attempt at deceit. Robina looked more scared and serious than ever when she appeared with a lighted cand'e in the drawing room, shaking her solemn head. Her eyes were so round, and her look so solemn, that she looked not unlike a large white owl in the imperfect light—and so Lily told her with a tremulous laugh, to avert, if possible, the coming storm. But Beenie's storm, though confused and full of much vague rumble of ineffectual thunder, was not to be averted. She repeated her undefined but powerful remonstrance, "Oh, Miss Lily!" as she set down the one small candle in the midst of the darkness, with much shaking of her head.

"Well, what is it? Stop shaking your head, or you will shake it off, and you and me will break our backs looking for it on the floor—and speak out your mind and be done with it," cried Lily, stamping her foot upon the carpet. Robina made a solemn pause before she repeated, still more emphatically, her "Oh, Miss Lily!" again.

"To bring in Miss Eelen's name—puir thing, puir thing, that has nothing to do with such vanities—just to give ye a countenance and be a screen to you, and you going to meet your lad, and no leddy near ye, at a'."

"Don't speak so loud," cried Lily, with an affectation of alarm: and then she added, "I never said Helen was coming—I only—"

"Put it so that Katrin thought that was what you meant. Oh, I ken fine! It's no a falsehood, you say, but it's a falsehood you put into folks' heads. And, deed, Katrin was a great fool to take heed for a moment of what you said—when it was just written plain in your eyes and every line of your countenance, and the very gown on

your back, that you had come from a meeting with your lad!"

"I wish you would not use such common words, Beenie! as if I were the housemaid meeting my lad!"

"I fail to see where the difference lies," said Beenie with dignity, "the thing's just the same. You're maybe no running the risks a poor lass runs, that has naeboddy to take care of her. But this is no more than the second time he's come, and lo! there's a wall of lees rising round your feet already, trippin' ye up at every step. What will ye say to Katrin, Miss Lily, the morn's night when ye come hame? Will ye keep it up and pretend till her that Miss Eelen's met ye at the auld Brig? or will ye invent some waur story to account for her no coming? or what, I ask ye, will ye do?"

"Katrin," said Lily, with burning cheeks, but a haughty elevation of the head—"has no right to cross-question me."

"Nor me either, Miss Lily, ye will be thinking?"

"It does not matter what I'm thinking. She is one thing and you are another. I have told you—Oh Beenie, Beenie," cried the girl suddenly, "Why do you begin to make objections so soon? What am I doing more than other girls do?—Who is it I am deceiving? nobody! Uncle Robert wanted to make me promise I would give him up—but I would not promise. I never said I would not see him and speak to him and make him welcome if he came to me—there was never a word of that between us. And as for Katrin!" cried Lily with scorn, "Why Grace Scott met Robbie Burns out at Duddingston, and told her mother she had only been walking with her cousin, and you just laughed when you told me.—And her mother! very different, very different from Katrin. You said what an ill lassie! but you laughed and you said Mrs. Scott was wrong to force them to it. That was all the remark you made, Robina, my dear woman," said Lily, recovering her spirit; "so

I am not going to put up with any criticism from you."—

"Oh, Miss Lily," Robina said: but what could she add to this mild remonstrance, having thus been convicted of a sympathy with the vagaries of lovers which she did not indeed deny? And it cannot be said that poor Lily's suggested falsehood did much harm. Katrin, for her part, had very little faith in Miss Eelen as the companion of the young lady's ramble. She too shook her head as she packed her basket. "I see now," she said, 'the meaning o't, which is aye a satisfaction. It's some fine lad that hasna siller enough to please Sir Robert. And he's come after her, and they're counting on a wheen walks and cracks together, poor young things. Maybe if she had had a mother it would have been different—or if poor Mr. James had lived, poor man, to take care of his ain bit bairn. Sir Robert's a dour auld carl, he's not one I would put such a charge upon. What does he ken about a young leddy's heart, poor thing? But they shall have a good lunch whatever," the good woman said.

And when the sun was high over the moor and everything shining—not too hot nor too bright, the tempered and still-breathing noon of the North—Lily set out upon her pony with the basket by her saddle, and all the world smiling and inviting before her. Never had such a daring and delightful holiday dawned upon her before. Almost a whole day to spend together—Ronald all that she dreamed, and not an inquisitive or unkindly eye to look upon them, not even Beenie to disturb their absorption in each other. She waved her whip in salutation to the others behind as they stood watching her set out. "A bonnie day to ye, Miss Lily," cried Katrin. "And you'll no be late?" said anxious Beenie. "'Od," cried Dougal with his cap on his ear, "I wish I had just put off thae potatoes and gone with her mysel'—" "Ye fuil!" said his wife, and said no further word. And Lily rode away in heavenly content and expectation over the moor.

*(To be continued.)*



SIEGMUND AND SIEGLINDE.

# WAGNER'S DRAMA: "DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN."

## DIE WALKÜRE.

THE opening of *Die Walküre* brings us to earth and the deeds and passions of mortals, instead of the conflicts of gods and giants. Many years have passed since Wotan, striding over the rainbow bridge to Walhall, formed the project of begetting a race of heroes whose prowess should undo the ill effects of his sin. During the interval that is supposed to have elapsed, he has wandered over the earth in mortal guise, and has begotten twin children—sister and brother.

At an early age their mother died, and Sieglinde, the sister, was carried off and married against her will by Hunding, a wild barbarian chieftain. Siegmund, the son, passed a roaming life in the forests with his father, until he reached man's estate; then his father mysteriously disappeared, leaving him to face the world alone. It was upon him that Wotan relied to redeem the curse of the Ring. After many hardships and adventures, he was at last sore beset by foes from whom he had endeavoured to rescue a maiden in distress, and, exhausted by his flight from them, was led by the hand of fate to seek refuge at the hearth of the very man who had robbed him of his sister. Of this man's kin, too, had been the men whom Siegmund had been fighting, and from whose numbers he had been forced to flee.

It is at this point that *Die Walküre* takes up the tale. The curtain rises upon the hall of Hunding's house, in the centre of which stands a huge ash tree whose trunk supports the roof. A fire is smouldering upon the hearth, and without is heard the turmoil of the storm. The door is flung open and Siegmund rushes in, faint and weary, and falls upon a bearskin which lies before the fire. Aroused by the sound, and supposing that it is Hunding who has returned, Sieglinde enters from the adjoining room and is amazed to see a stranger at her hearth. At once, however, her sympathy is aroused, and in answer to his appeal she fills a horn with mead and offers it to him. As he drinks their eyes meet, and both are conscious of the birth of an emotion that neither has felt before.

To understand the episode which follows the sudden and fateful love of Siegmund for Sieglinde, (of which much has, most unjustly, been made by the opponents of Wagner,) it must be remembered that in the first place we are dealing with beings who are not ordinary men and women, but semi-supernatural, swayed by forces and to be judged by standards which do not apply to mortals of a less primitive state of society; and, more especially, that it was necessary for the fulfilment of fate that the saviour hero should be born of Wotan's direct line and be of the pure, god-like blood of the Volung. Moreover, as will presently be seen, in spite of Wotan's desire, sure punishment awaited the outrage of moral law which his scheme necessitated. It will be seen, too, that all took place by the working of an inevitable destiny, for it is not until their passion is irrevocably declared that Siegmund and Sieglinde discover their kinship.

But this is to anticipate our story. Siegmund's first impulse is to leave Sieglinde, for, as he tells her, he brings misfortune wherever he goes. She urges him to stay, sorrowfully saying that he can bring no misfortune that can make her more unhappy than she is at present. At this juncture Hunding returns and is obliged, by the laws of hospitality, to offer the stranger the shelter of his house, although he discovers him to be one of his foes. But on the morrow, he tells Siegmund, they must fight to the death.

Siegmund is left alone, without a weapon and without hope, until Sieglinde, irresistibly attracted, returns to him and points out to his astonished gaze the hilt of a sword which protrudes from the trunk of the ash tree. This sword, she tells him, was thrust into the tree on the day of her marriage by a mysterious stranger, whose words were that none should wield it save he who had the strength to wrest it forth.

Gradually Siegmund realises that this had been none other than Wotan, his father, and that this was the sword which he had promised him should be his in the hour of need. A love passage



BRÜNNHILDE'S SUMMONS.



of exquisite beauty follows, and reaches its climax in the exulting accents of Siegmund as he wrenches the sword from the tree, and, holding it triumphantly aloft, draws Sieglinde to his breast.

Punishment speedily follows upon their sin, and at once Wotan is made to feel the inexorable dominion of the Nibelung's curse. At the beginning of the second act we find him full of hope for his cherished scheme. Hunding is to be slain in his fight with Siegmund, whose prowess is to set the world aright. As the scene opens, Wotan is unfolding his plans to Brünnhilde, his favourite "Valkyr" maid, bidding her protect Siegmund in the combat. The arrival of the Goddess Fricka, the protectress of the sanctity of marriage, shatters all his hopes. She is full of fury at the outrage that Siegmund and Sieglinde have committed, and demands the death of the former as expiation for his fault.

The will of Wotan, which here is all for the preservation of his son, must bow to the law of right, and he is obliged to give his word that Siegmund shall fall. In this, as he sorrowfully tells Brünnhilde, he sees the working of the curse; not only must he slay the son whom he loves, but with him his hope of a saviour hero. To Brünnhilde, who seeks to persuade him to carry out his wish in spite of all, he relates the story of the Ring and its curse; how the Giant Fafner, who possesses the gold, has taken upon him the shape of a huge dragon, and guards his treasure in the recesses of the forest; how he himself had hoped to beget a hero who should win it back for the gods, and redeem the world from the curse.

All, however, must now be abandoned. Siegmund must be slain, and Brünnhilde is sent to warn him of his fate.

Only when about to die was a mortal able to see the beautiful Valkyr maiden who was, after his death, to bear him to Walhall, the paradise of heroes. Thus when Siegmund (who with Sieglinde has sunk, exhausted by flight, upon the spot where Wotan has pronounced his doom) perceives the Valkyr standing, with her horse, motionless beside him, he knows the significance of her greeting. Rather than go to join the heroes in a Walhall where there is no Sieglinde, he is about to kill her and die miserably by his own hand, when Brünnhilde arrests his sword. Touched to the

heart by his fate, she bids him take courage, for she will brave Wotan's wrath and obey what she knows to be his secret wish by protecting Siegmund in the fight. Sieglinde, too, must live for the birth of their son Siegfried, who is to prove the hero longed for by Wotan, and is to accomplish his desire, though in a manner different from that imagined by the father of the gods.

Soon Hunding's voice is heard among the rocks at the back calling Siegmund, who rushes joyfully to encounter him, full of trust in the promised protection of Brünnhilde. The men meet, and a flash of light through the storm which is raging shews us Brünnhilde standing beside Siegmund, protecting him with her shield and urging him to trust to his sword. At the same instant a lurid light blazes behind them, and the figure of Wotan is seen stretching his spear across Siegmund's sword, which at its touch is shattered into splinters, while Hunding pierces his adversary to the heart. With a cry of dismay Brünnhilde flees from the face of Wotan, and, catching up on to her horse the insensible form of Sieglinde, rides madly off.

At a contemptuous wave of Wotan's hand Hunding falls dead, and the god stands, silent and sorrowful, gazing at the dead Siegmund and the ruin of all his hopes. Even this is not the sum of the misery which he must inflict; his best loved daughter Brünnhilde must be punished for her disobedience, and pay a terrible penalty for having, in her love, carried out what she knew to be the wish hidden in her father's heart.

Thus for the second time love suffers from the curse of Alberich. Wotan is obliged to relinquish hope, joy, and power, and await the destined "end of the gods." And yet, as Erda, the all-wise goddess, knows, a champion for the world is to be born in the person of Sieglinde's son; but his prowess, although it is to result in the restoration of the Ring to its guardian Rhine Maidens, is only to attain its end through the final destruction of Wotan's power, and the destruction of the god himself and his fellows.

The last scenes of *Die Walküre* are enacted upon a wild rocky height in the midst of a forest. This is the meeting place of the Valkyr maidens, and hither in the midst of the tumult of the storm they ride, each with a slain warrior thrown across their saddles. It had been part of Wotan's scheme that these nine daughters, whom Erda had borne





THE RIDE OF THE VALKYRIES

him, should select the noblest heroes from among the dead and bear them to Walhall, where they should in the future help to defend the gods against their impending destruction.

With wild, exulting cries each Valkyr greets the other as she arrives, till all but one are assembled. Presently they espy in the distance Brünnhilde riding furiously towards them, but supporting, to their amazement, a woman's form, and no hero's, on her saddle. Explaining hurriedly to her sisters what has taken place, she begs them to shelter herself and Sieglinde from the wrath of Wotan, who, in his rage, is pursuing her.

Sieglinde at first craves for death at Brünnhilde's hand. Siegmund being dead, life has no brightness for her, and she would be with him: but her courage and hope are aroused afresh upon Brünnhilde's telling her that in her bosom she bears a living pledge of Siegmund's love, and that it is her son that shall be the hero that must free the earth from the fatal curse. "Siegfried" she is to call him, for he is to be victorious; and as a sacred trust for him, Brünnhilde gives her the fragments of Siegmund's sword, bidding her seek shelter in the forest where Fafner, in dragon's shape, guards the Ring, for there she will be safe from Wotan's vengeance.

The scene which follows between Wotan and Brünnhilde is one of the greatest beauty. The Valkyr in vain endeavours to avert the anger of her divine father by pleading that she was ever chosen to carry out his will, that she was part of himself, and was but carrying out his unspoken wish when she disobeyed his spoken command. Nevertheless outraged law must be vindicated, and Wotan's terrible decree is that her godhead is to be taken from her; she is to become a mortal maid, the prey of the first passer-by.

In reality it is by Brünnhilde's becoming a woman, with a woman's love and tenderness, that the final redemption from the curse is to take place; but this she cannot yet know. Nor is Wotan yet to know it; to him it means another, and perhaps the deepest, grief that his own sin has brought upon him.

As a last boon, Brünnhilde begs that Wotan may surround her with a wall of flame, so that none but a hero, with courage to break through so terrifying a rampart, may win her for his own. It is sufficient disgrace that she is no longer to be one of Wotan's "wish daughters;" let it not be her lot to come under the mastery of some weakling mortal.

This Wotan grants. He kisses her tenderly on the eyes, "kissing the godhead from her," whereupon she falls into a deep sleep. He lays her upon a mossy bank on the summit of the rock, and, striking his spear upon the ground, summons Loki, the fire god. Tracing with his spear-point a line round Brünnhilde's resting-place, Wotan bids Loki gird the spot with flame: and, as his bidding is fulfilled, the god stands wistfully gazing upon his best loved child, and takes his farewell of her in tones of exquisite beauty and sadness.

Here ends *Die Walküre*. Forthwith Wotan plays but a secondary part in the drama; our attention is mainly concerned with the hero Siegfried, and with Brünnhilde, the type of heroic womanhood, whose self-sacrifice is eventually to be the power which defeats that of the Nibelung's curse.

Wotan, by his grief at the succession of misery he has caused, and by the abandonment of all his hopes, may be said to have expiated his sin—but his power is gone. His supremacy rested on his inviolable word. That, as we saw in *Das Rheingold*, he had broken; he is no longer the all-powerful god, but must await his inevitable doom.

"Einer nur freie die Braut,  
Der freier als ich, der Gott!"

he says to Brünnhilde, as the flames rise around her:—

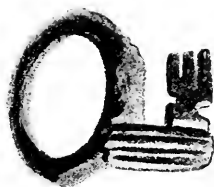
"There is but one who can win thee for bride,  
One freer than I the god!"

The hope of the world henceforth centres in Siegfried, the type of vigorous youth and innocence.

R. FARQUHARSON SHARP.



WOTAN CALLING UP THE FIRE.



## THE GOLDEN CIRCLET.

BY BENJAMIN TAYLOR, F.R.G.S.

THE magic which attaches to the golden circlet has been from time immemorial, and bids fair to endure till time shall be no more. A complete and comprehensive history of the Folklore of the Ring has yet to be written, but the leisurely dabbler in quaint and curious volumes of forgotten lore often comes upon interesting and suggestive references.

Why, for instance, is the wedding-ring to be worn on the fourth finger of the left hand? The answer is to be found in old missals, which show that it was believed that a vein runs from this finger to the heart. "This, indeed," comments old Wheatley, "is now contradicted by experience, but several eminent authors, as well Gentiles as Christians, as well Physicians as Divines, were formerly of this opinion and therefore they thought this finger the properest to bear this pledge of love, that from thence it might be conveyed, as it were, to the heart."

Thus "Antiquity" had, as usual, a reason of its own for its practice, and a reason founded on faith, whatever we may think of it, while retaining the practice. Another writer calls this magic forefinger "Medicus," on account of its presumed cardiac virtues, and says that the old physicians used to mix their medicaments and potions with this finger (after washing, one would fain hope!) "because no venom can stick upon the very outmost part of it, but will offend a man and communicate itself to his heart."

More prosaic is the explanation that the bridegroom found it more convenient to place a ring on

the finger of the left than on one of the right hand of his bride, and that the fourth finger was chosen because it is less used than any of the rest, and cannot be stretched out by itself.

The importance of this, again, is associated with the superstition that a wedding ring, once on, should never be taken off for any purpose. For the ring symbolises a love without end, and an alliance that cannot be broken during life—"till death do us part." The belief still endures in many parts of the country that if a married woman loses her wedding-ring, she will lose her husband's affections, and that if she breaks it, death will follow.

The origin of the "posie," or ring-motto, seems buried in antiquity. The rings of the ancient Greeks and Romans were often inscribed with sentences and sentiments, such as "Good fortune to the wearer." "Live long." "Live happy." "A pledge of love," etc. The Greeks seem to have been the first of civilized nations to attach a sentimental value to the ring. With the Jews the hoop was a solemn and serious reality. It formed a most important feature in both betrothal and marriage, and, according to the Jewish law, it must be of a certain value, assessed and certified by the Chief Rabbis of the synagogue. The Jewish betrothal is practically a marriage, since it cannot be dissolved without legal process. The German betrothal of the present day is almost as elaborate, if not so binding. And in England solemn betrothal by ring was the custom of the middle ages.

In this country ring-posies began to be common about the middle of the sixteenth century. They took such form as

"Our contract  
Was heaven's Act."

"In thee my choice  
I do rejoyce."

"God above  
Increase our love."

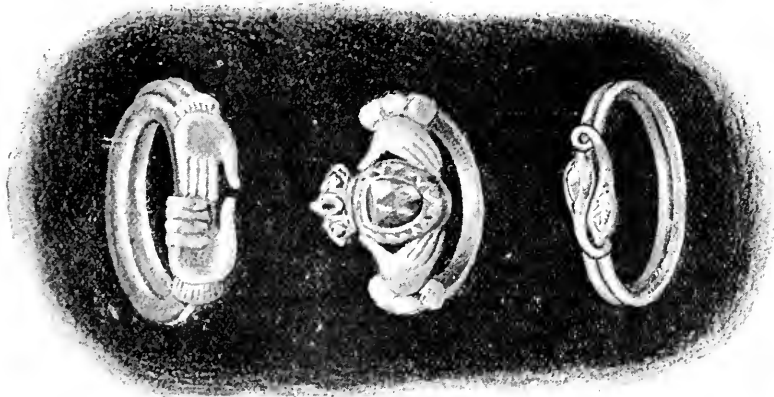
"Love's Garland," a little work published in 1624, contains a collection of these posies. Dr. Brewer, in his useful Handbook, gives some sixty specimens, including the familiar

"When this you see,  
Remember me."

which has certainly been popular in England for

ceremony—a token whereby the husband gave the wife authority over his household.

Much controversy has been indulged in over the meaning of the "Gimmel" ring. It is an old word, although, so far as we know, it occurs neither in Chaucer nor in Spenser. Shakespeare has it, we think, only twice. Johnson thought the word was corrupted from "geometrical," and was first applied to quaint devices. But Herrick refers to a "ring of gimmals" as implying "Thy love had one knot, mine a triple-eye." The word "gimmel," in fact, is the same as the "gimbal" of the mariner's compass, which is simply a double, or intertwined, ring. And the gimmel-ring, whatever it was originally, became a ring of affiance—the man putting his finger through one hoop and the maid her's through another, to symbolise a joint-yoke.



1.—FEDE RING, 18TH CENT., ENGLISH.

2.—ENGLISH MARRIAGE RING, 1706.

3.—GIMMAL, 18TH CENT.

upwards of two hundred years. Chambers mentions the case of Bishop Thomas, of Lincoln, who, in 1753, on marrying his *fourth* wife, had inscribed on the wedding-ring the lines—

"If I survive  
I'll make them five!"

There is another symbolism in the wedding-ring, however, more practical than either of those as yet referred to. In the very earliest ages of the world the ring was a token of authority. This is why Pharaoh took the ring off his finger and gave it to Joseph when investing him with the government of Egypt; and why Ahasuerus gave his ring to Mordecai, "whom the king delighted to honour." The golden circlet was a token of authority, and as such was regarded when the Christian Church employed it in the marriage

The general design of the "gimmel-ring," or double-hoop, was probably of French origin, for the French have a peculiar talent for such artistic trifles. The idea is certainly poetic—two hoops, both apparently free yet inseparable, formed for union, and complete only in their union. After affiance, however, it seems to have been the practice to separate the hoops, so that each lover might wear one until the happy day when marriage should unite both lovers and rings.

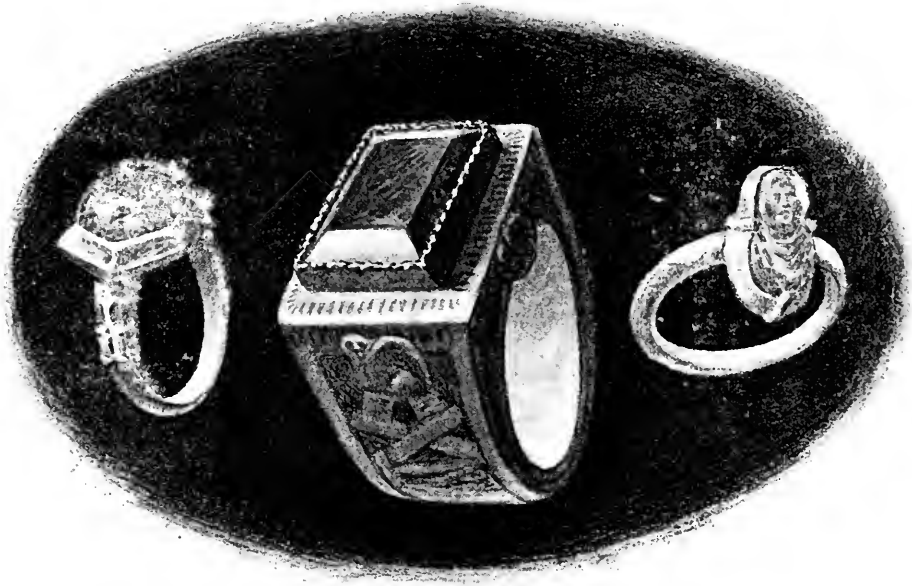
A writer in the "Book of Days" describes the "gimmel-ring" as sometimes a triple-link turning upon a point so as to close in one solid ring. It was customary, it is said, to break these rings asunder at the betrothal, which was ratified when the man and woman broke away the upper and lower rings, and a witness of the engagement retained the

central hoop. When the wedding took place the three portions were again united and became the wedding-ring used in the ceremony ; this accounts for the clasped hands which used to figure on the old-fashioned wedding-rings, even when solid. It was an Elizabethan device, and we cannot trace the "gimmal-ring" in this country further back than the Elizabethan age.

Robert Chambers wrote, we know not on what authority, that this fashion of ring was still (1881) in use among a community of fishermen in county Galway, Ireland, among whom the wedding-ring is an heirloom in the family, of quaint and curious

enterprises and averted evil and misfortune from him.

In the grim and gloomy days of the seventeenth century, a ring with a death's head was often affected by religious enthusiasts. With such a ring did the young Earl of Balcarres wed Mauritia of Nassau, a kinswoman of William III., who (then Prince of Orange) had presented the bride with some splendid jewels. He was more regardful than the bridegroom, for Balcarres forgot both the wedding day and the ring, and when he did hurry off to the church, could find nothing but a death's-head hoop. With this he hurried to the altar and the ceremony



1.—EPISCOPAL RING, FRENCH, 14TH CENT.

2.—PAPAL RING, 13TH CENT.

3.—EPISCOPAL RING, 13TH CENT.

device on the Elizabethan pattern, and passing ever from mother to eldest daughter.

In Oriental legend one meets with a steel ring which rendered the wearer invisible. In the Arthurian legends one meets with a gold ring with the same properties ; Lynet gave one to Sir Owain, which, when he closed his hand upon it with the stone inside, instantly effaced him. Dame Lyonesse gave one to Sir Gareth, which turned green to red and red to green, blue to white and white to blue, which increased the beauty of the wearer, and acted as a charm so that whoever wore it should never lose blood. And all over the world one finds legends of miraculous rings which ensured the success of the wearer in all

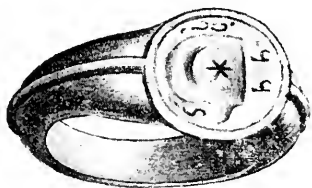
was completed, but the bride fainted at the omen, and predicted that she would die within the year—which she did.

Among our Anglo Saxon forefathers, according to Chambers, when two persons were betrothed, the bridegroom gave a pledge of "wed," from which we derive the word wedding. This "wed" consisted, in part at any rate, of a ring, which was placed on the maiden's right hand, and worn there until transferred, at the marriage ceremony, to the left. The bride was then taken "for fairer, for fouler, for better, for worse." The bride promised to be "buxom and bonny" to her husband, and the bridegroom then put the ring on each of the fingers of her left hand in turn, saying at the first,

"In the name of the Father;" at the second, "In the name of the Son;" at the third, "In the name of the Holy Ghost," and at the fourth, "Amen." The maiden's father next presented one of his daughter's shoes, with which the bridegroom tapped her on the head, as a sign and token that

its stomach, and to this day the arms of the See and City of Glasgow bear a salmon with a ring in its mouth, resting against the tree of St. Kentigern, upon which was hung the bell that summoned the monks to prayer.

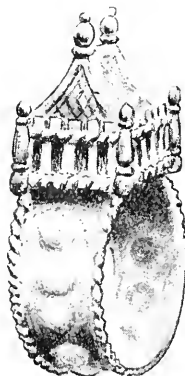
Brand, the famous antiquarian, tells a story of



GERMAN CHARM RING, 16TH CENT.

authority over her was now transferred to him. The law, in fact, allowed him, in those days, to bestow personal castigation on his wife, if she stood in need of it, but it also allowed her to leave him if he failed in his oath to treat her well. According to an old Welsh law it would seem that three blows with a broomstick, not longer than the arm nor thicker than the middle finger, were considered a fair allowance for the husband to give.

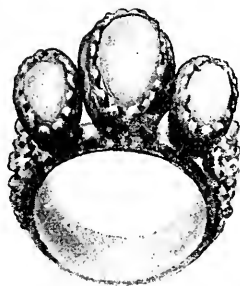
Stories of lost rings and miraculous restorations abound. The armorial bearings of the City of Glasgow had origin in one such, dating from the days of St. Kentigern, or St. Mungo as he is locally called. The Queen of Cadzow had given away to a lover a ring which she had received from her liege lord and master, and when he one day demanded a sight of the hoop, she betook her for counsel to the saint. The good Kentigern reprimanded and then consoled her, saying that the ring should be restored. He took his fishing-tackle, and,



JEWISH WEDDING RING, 17TH CENT.

the river Tyne. About the year 1559, a certain Sir Francis Anderson dropped his ring into the water as he was looking over the old Tyne Bridge, between Newcastle and Gateshead. It came back to him afterwards in the stomach of a fish which his servant bought in the market.

A wonderful story was vouched for as strictly true in *Notes and Queries*, some thirty years ago. A servant was sent into the town with a valuable ring. He took it out of its box to admire it, and in passing over a plank-bridge, he let it fall on a muddy bank. Not being able to find it, he ran away, took to the sea, finally settled in a colony, made a large fortune, came back after many years, and bought the estate on which he had been servant. One day, while walking over his land with a friend, he came to the plank-bridge, and there told his friend the story. "I could swear to the very spot on which the ring dropped," said he, pushing his stick into the mud. When he



WOLF'S-TEETH CHARM, GERMAN, 16TH CENT.

going to the river-bank, cast for a big salmon, which he quickly landed and sent home to the lady. When the fish was opened the ring was found in



INCANTATION RING, 15TH CENT.



ROMAN.

withdrew the stick the ring was on the end of it!

There is an old Talmudic legend of how Asmodeus stole from Solomon the ring that



conferred wisdom and power on him, and threw it into the sea, and of how it was returned soon afterwards in the belly of a fish. So, too, in the Hindu mythology, Sakimtai finds in the belly of a fish the ring she lost while bathing; and in the "Arabian Nights" are other instances of lost jewels recovered in a marvellous manner.

In the Teutonic legend of Brynhild one finds a dwarf possessed of a golden ring, from which other golden rings are constantly dropping. This ring is the source of all his wealth, on which, however, rests a curse leading to woe. It was decreed that "whoso had that gold ring should find it his bane." Brynhild gave this ring to Sigurd, and tragic was

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN.

ROMAN ANCIENT.



ANGLO-SAXON.

ROMAN.

ROMAN.

the end. But as a general rule, it may be said of the stories of magic rings, that the ring is an emblem and instrument of good luck rather than of evil fortune.

One Easter custom of the middle ages was the distribution of "cramp-rings." On Good Friday the king went in state to the royal chapel and crept along the ground, as evidence of his humility, towards a crucifix, near which was placed a silver basin. In this basin were placed a number of rings which the king blessed, and which were thereafter distributed as infallible cures of cramp. This custom originated in the belief in the curative efficacy of a ring once worn by Edward the Confessor, which was kept in Westminster Abbey, and the belief in the virtues of the cramp-ring was not a mere vulgar superstition, but was cherished by all classes and not altogether disputed by the medicos of the period.

About the middle of the twelfth century were brought to Cologne those famous relics, the reputed bones of the Magi, the three Wise Men of the East who went with their offerings to Bethlehem on the birth of Christ. They were, according to the mediæval legend, Melchior, King of Nubia; Balthazar, King of Chaldea, and Jasper, King of Tarshish. Their bones were collected by Constantine (or as some say, by his mother, the Empress Helena) and taken to Constantinople, where they remained until removed, first to Milan, and afterwards to Cologne, where they were enshrined in a splendid reliquary. The skulls only were shown to the visitor, and these skulls were

believed to have marvellous virtues. Anything that touched them was supposed to be endued with the power of preserving the possessor from accidents, sorcery, and sudden death. Even the names of the Magi came to be regarded as charms, were inscribed on girdles, garters, and rings. Fourteenth century rings were very commonly engraved with these names; and while such inscribed circlets were made both of gold and silver for the rich, lead rings with the sacred names impressed upon them in a mould were made for the use of the poor. The special virtue of these rings, like those blessed by the king, was that they prevented or cured the cramp—surely a much more frequent ailment then than now.

In Somersetshire all the fingers of the left hand are believed to be injurious when touching sores or wounds, except the ring-finger. And in many parts both of England, Scotland, and Ireland, are



to be found people who still believe, or profess to believe, that a wart or mole may be removed by the rubbing of a wedding-ring.

In Fry's Bibliographical Memoranda it is recorded that when Mary Tudor wedded Philip of Spain, "The Queen's wedding-ring was a plain hoop of gold without any stone in it. For that was, it is said, her pleasure, because maydens were so married in olde tymes."

According to Buckle's notes, the Puritans in the sixteenth century sometimes used the ring at the marriage ceremony and sometimes discarded it; but when they discarded it they were apt to be reproached.

Falstaff's "Alderman's thumb-ring" was pretty well understood in the seventeenth century. According to Fairholt, it was not uncommon at this period for persons of both sexes to wear a ring on the thumb; and in numerous prints and pictures such a ring can be seen.

"A ryng with a diamond" is mentioned in a will dated in 1427. Diamond rings were not unfamiliar in the fifteenth century, and they were worn by men in the sixteenth century, as may be gathered from Ben Johnson. Samuel Pepys, in 1668, writing of a visit to his aunt, says: "Mighty proud is she of her wedding-ring, being lately set with diamonds, cost her about £12." In Evelyn's Diary we find mention of an onyx ring with engraved armorial bearings.

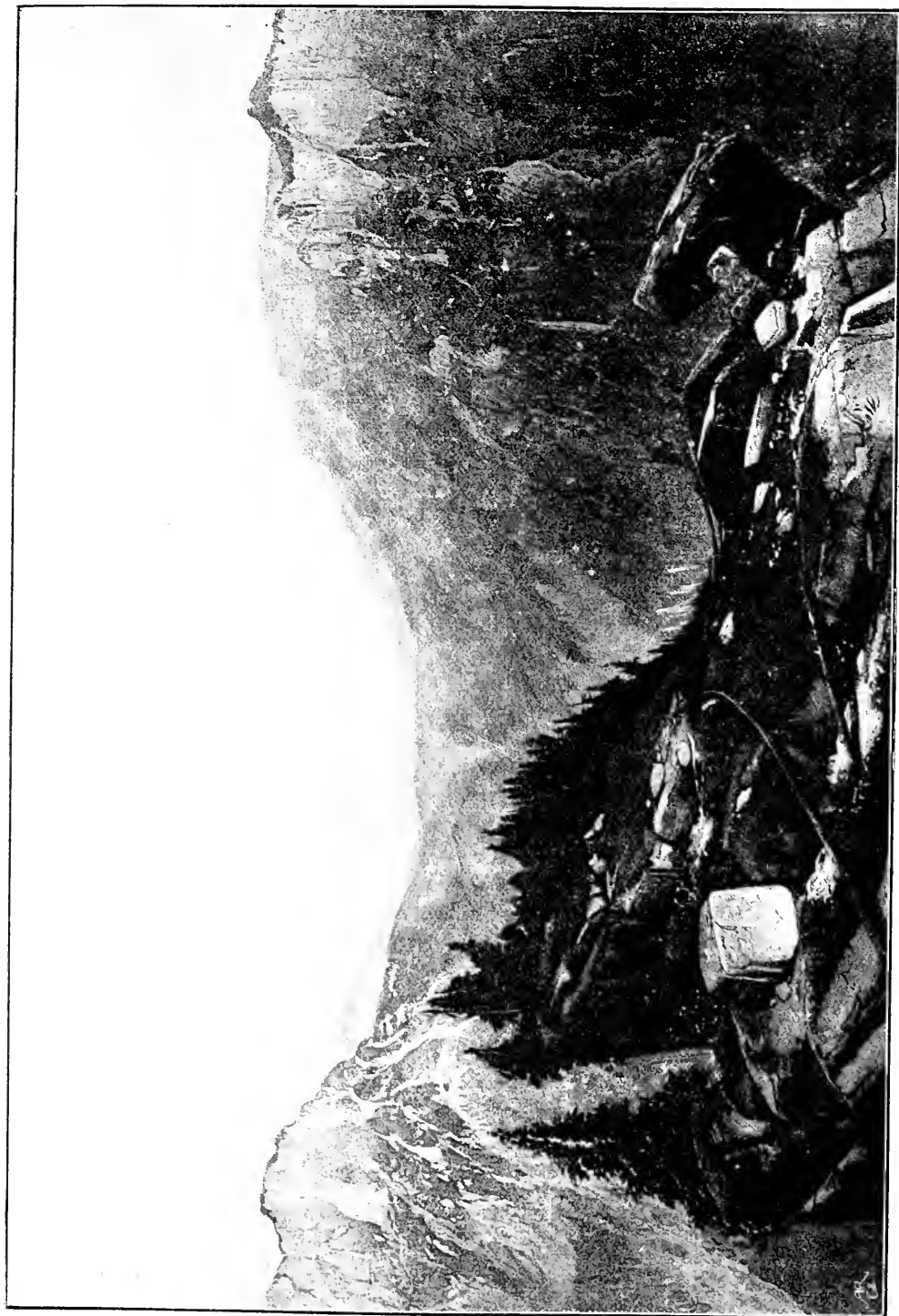
Mention has been made of the hereditary wedding-ring in one part of Ireland, but, according to Mr. Thistleton-Dyer, there is a town in the South-

east of Ireland where gold wedding-rings were kept for hire, and where, when parties who were too poor to purchase a ring of the necessary precious metal were about to be married, they obtained the loan of one, and paid a small fee for the same, the ring being returned to the owner immediately after the ceremony. In some other places, according to the same authority, it is customary for the same ring to be used for many marriages, and for that purpose it remains in the custody of the priest.

Another Irish custom is the hiding of a ring in a Michaelmas pie, the finder being ensured an early marriage; but indeed something analogous to this custom one finds in all parts of the country, in the ring, button, and silver coin hidden in cakes at wedding, christening, and birthday festivities. So again the custom is not peculiar to Scotland of putting a piece of the bride-cake through a wedding-ring, to enable a maiden to dream of her own future husband.

It seems to have been once the custom to give away rings as wedding-favours, and a case is related by Anthony Wood of a wedding in Queen Elizabeth's time, at which the bridegroom gave away rings made of three twisted gold-wires (was this another application of the *Gimmel*?) to the value of four thousand pounds. Happily this custom did not long survive, and the modern bridegroom doubtless thinks the brooches or lockets for the bridesmaids a quite sufficient display of jewelry at his expense, when he is bestowing for life the Circlet of Gold.





VIEW OF THE LOWER YELLOWSTONE RANGE.

## WONDERLAND.

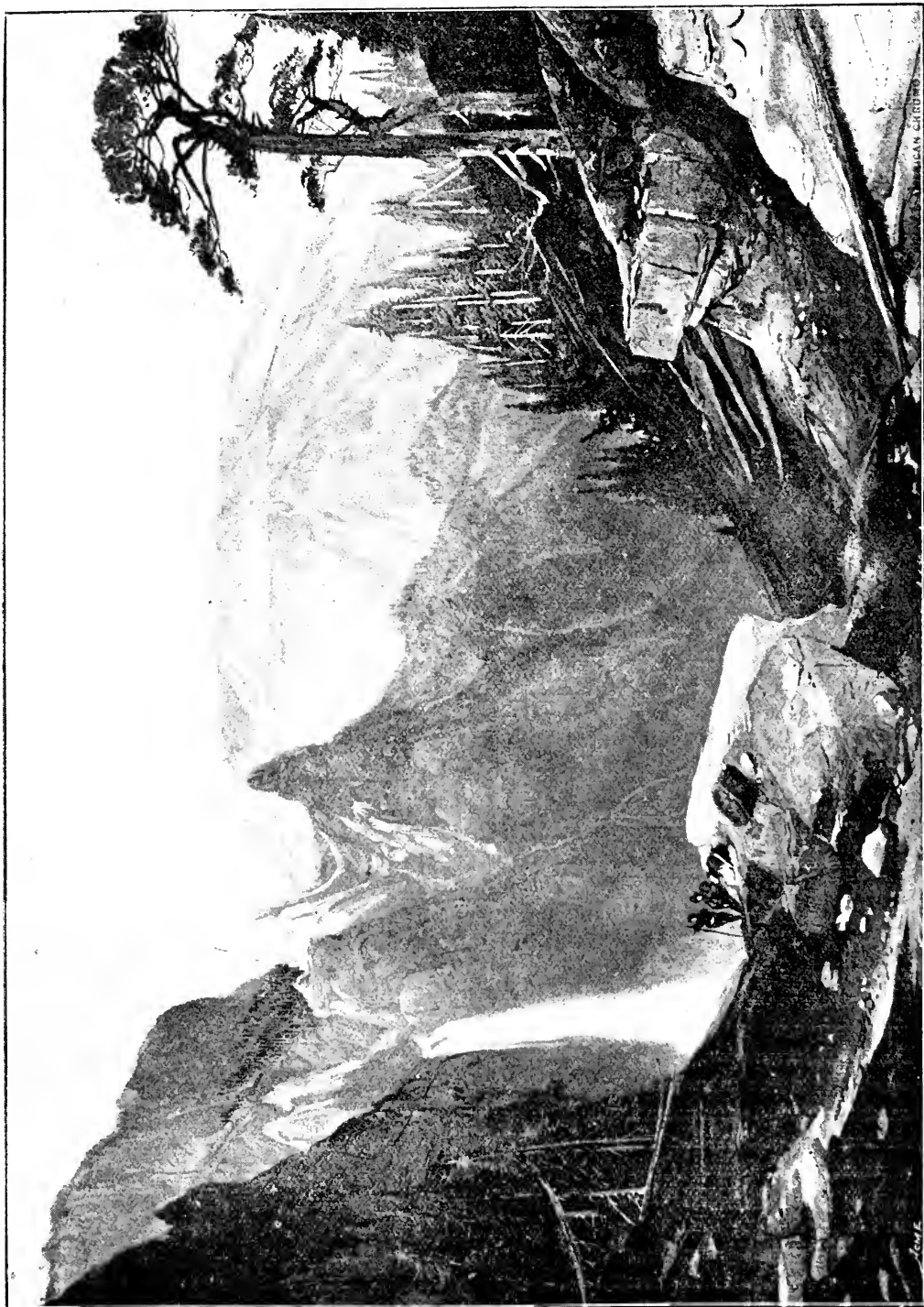
BY PERCIVAL RIVERS.

IF to the geologist the geysers and hot springs prove the supreme attraction of the Yellowstone National Park, those of a less scientific turn of mind will speedily discover that these are but an introduction to the many marvels which Nature has provided for their entertainment in this vast pleasure-ground of her own construction; indeed, selection is rendered difficult by their very number and variety. Lovers of natural beauty, and those with a relish for hazardous adventure, will alike find ample scope for the gratification of their respective tastes. And, unlike European resorts, from which romance has been almost entirely banished by stereotyped routes, beaten flat by the feet of ordinary globe-trotters, and "personally conducted tours," the members of which resemble nothing so much as a herd of "dumb, driven cattle," the regions to be here explored embrace an area so wide that each traveller may well believe himself to be the only one, and may move from stage to stage of his journey without the rushing and scrambling for accommodation which so greatly interfere with the pleasure of travel on the Continent. To journey through the sublimest scenes of Nature with an empty babble of talk in one's ears, is in no wise conducive to the delight which such scenes are calculated to inspire: and doubtless there are many who would willingly sacrifice the luxuries of modern travel for the greater freedom to be enjoyed by those who have chosen routes through unfrequented districts. Alas, however, now that the world is girdled by the iron belt which to Shakespeare was but a fairy's dream, and the sound of the steam whistle startles the silence that has brooded for ages over the Holy Land, where can we hope any longer to find such routes? One feels almost tempted to anathematise that kettle with its dancing lid which first suggested to Mr. James Watt the wild idea of mounting humanity on the wings of steam, and so unsettling the general equilibrium of the world. The sanctity of the very mountains, no longer a

barrier in the way of man's ambition, has been invaded, and travellers are now hoisted on cog-wheeled railroads up to the very summits of peaks which were formerly accessible only to the eagle and the chamois, or, perhaps, an adventurous climber with an expert guide at his side. Nor need it surprise us if, in course of time, we hear of cheap railway trips to the top of the Himalaya or the Sierra Nevada mountains, with first-class hotel accommodation to compensate for the fatigue of the journey, at the end of it. Doubtless the sunrise is quite as glorious from the summit of these mountains as from the Rigi or Pilatus, where the anticipated splendour can charm Hebe from her chamber at the darkest hour of the night in that unadorned beauty which, we are assured on the best authority, is then adorned the most, but which has been known to withdraw from the distant mountain peaks the gaze of some male spectator in his fruitless efforts to identify the muffled, shivering figure at his side with the ravishing vision of the night before.

With much more justice than those to whom the Augustan poet addressed his remonstrance, might we of this nineteenth century be accused of scaling the very heavens in our insolence.

There are still, however, on the earth's surface a few spots not yet dominated by man's ambition, and although the Yellowstone Park is every year becoming more accessible by the ordinary means of locomotion, the barriers of nature are here of such a kind as to bid defiance even to the encroachments of this scientific age; and, with a foresight which cannot be too highly commended, the American Government has taken care to protect this treasure-house of nature from the ruthless invasion of science, which would have little respect for the marvellous creations of centuries' growth, and as little hesitation in reducing them all, if it could, to the dead level of a railroad. Although, however, mountains may be scaled, and oceans crossed, there is no possibility of levelling



TOWER FALLS AND SULPHUR MOUNTAIN,

the one or draining the other; and thus the American recreation-ground will continue to afford endless delight to all who love travel for travel's sake.

From what we have already seen of it, we should expect that this public park would lack none of the usual attractions of similar resorts, among which must be reckoned a sheet of water large enough to bear some resemblance to a lake; nor are we disappointed, only in this case the sheet of water covers an area of about 125 square miles.

The Yellowstone Lake, as it is now called, has an elevation of 7,788 feet, the highest of any lake of importance, save the Sacred Lakes of Thibet, Lake Nameho of the Himalayas, and Lake Titicaca of Peru. Of a deep emerald-green hue, it lies like a gem in the "diadem of snow" that crowns the surrounding mountains. For ages it has been the home of the sea-birds, which have here lived their free, happy life, undisturbed by the sounds of civilisation. In the early morning the surface of the lake is smooth and placid, exhibiting several gradations of colour, from vivid green to ultramarine; but later in the day gusts of wind, accompanied by a peculiar whistling sound, are heard arising, which ere-long descend upon the lake, ruffling its surface into long lines of foaming waves, which dash themselves furiously on the shore.

With its three islands and the dense pine woods that hem it round on three sides, far above which tower the snow-capped mountains, this lake affords a prospect which well repays all the fatigue experienced in approaching its shores, the curves of which, by their unique symmetry, have excited the admiration of every artist who has visited the spot. One of these curves forms what has been called Diamond Beach, from the crystals found among its sand.

On the North-West arm of the lake are some springs, the water of which is boiling hot, while that of the lake is extremely cold; and it is a curious fact that, standing on one of the silicious mounds about these springs, a man may provide himself with his breakfast by simply lifting the trout which he has caught from the lake, and dipping it into one of the springs.

To the ambitious mountain-climber, however, the lake, with all its wonder and beauty, will prove less attractive than those lofty mountain summits, from which a prospect can be commanded the extent of which almost defies belief. We have, however, the testimony of an eye-witness that

from the top of one mountain "the scope of vision embraces a circle having a radius of 150 miles, within which 470 mountain peaks, worthy of the name, can be distinctly observed. The area swept by the eye from this point cannot be less than 50,000 square miles, embracing large portions of Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, and Utah, and exhibiting every variety of the grandest and most beautiful scenery. Ten large lakes, and several smaller ones, are taken in by this view, and the entire Yellowstone Park is spread out under the eye. The purity of the atmosphere in these high latitudes is well known, so that these statements will not seem exaggerated."

From this same eminence is seen the group of mountains called the Lower Yellowstone Range, which are thought by many who have seen them to rival the famous European groups. They present a series of jagged peaks, like huge pyramids, extending in one line to a distance of forty miles, their white summits glittering in the sunlight, and their granite sides, sharply perpendicular, reflecting at sunset all those brilliant colours which form one of the distinguishing natural features of this marvellous region. So vivid, indeed, are these colours, and so strangely blended, that when reproduced on the artist's canvas, they seem grossly exaggerated. Yet most of us can recall sunsets, the splendours of which not even a Turner could do more than faintly indicate; and Nature seems to have expended all her most gorgeous hues in the adornment of this realm of wonder.

Standing on one of the lofty promontories, with a prospect so sublime before us, we are reminded of words which, though descriptive of another, are nevertheless applicable to this scene:—

"The rocky summits, split and rent,  
Form'd turret, dome, or battlement,  
Or seemed fantastically set  
With cupola, or minaret,  
Or mosque of eastern architect.

\* \* \* \* \*

So wondrous wild, the whole might seem  
The scenery of a fairy dream."

He who has climbed to those supreme pinnacles of nature's temple, reared so far above the turmoil and sordid strife of the world, must realise the comparative insignificance of all terrestrial things; and to him

"The silence that is in the starry sky,  
The sleep that is among the lonely hills"



YELLOWSTONE LAKE.

will have a language whose eloquence can only be felt in such a scene. Insensate indeed must be the mind which is not awed by its sublimity into adoration of the omnipotent Creator, who "hath weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance."

Yet, though man's adventurous foot may invade these holy places of nature, he may not tarry there; and, despite the fascination they have exercised over his spirit, he must descend ere long to the common level of life, regretfully, indeed, and with many a lingering look behind at the glories he is leaving, the memory of which he would fain preserve as a lasting possession to cheer him amid the shadows of the valley through which, after all, his pilgrim journey lies.

The traveller in the Yellowstone Park, however, will find compensation in the new marvels which await him on his descent to the plain. Here he passes from one unique scene to another, each with some distinctive peculiarity which stamps it on the memory. Nowhere else, perhaps, are more fantastic shapes to be met with than in this part of the world. These have been formed by the action of water cutting through beds of volcanic breccia of from three to five thousand feet in thickness, and leaving vertical walls of the same height, upon which huge castles and towers, such as are represented in the accompanying illustration, stand in solemn grandeur, as if fashioned by Titanic hands to mark their former abodes. Expert climbers have even ascended their steep sides; but so great is the height above the chasm far beneath, that dizziness is apt to supervene, and the experiment is too hazardous to be lightly attempted.

The swift stream, which rushes between two overhanging masses with an impetuous current that marks its approach to what is called Tower Falls, dashes over a perpendicular ledge of 156 feet, then flows onward to join the Yellowstone at some little distance from the fall.

On the opposite side of the Yellowstone a conspicuous object arrests the eye. This is what has been appropriately termed "Sulphur Mountain." Its shape and colour are alike peculiar, still more so the two rows of basaltic columns which extend for two miles along the river. In form, these columns are hexagonal, those in the upper row being from 15 to 20 feet high, while those below

reach 30 feet. From the preponderance of sulphur in its strata this mountain derives its name. Like most of the sights in this spacious recreation-ground, it will be remembered for its very peculiarity. To the geologist it offers scope for endless investigation.

Turning from the mountain to the river at its base, we are again reminded of the immensity of this National Park. The Yellowstone River, itself only a branch of the great Missouri, has a length of 1,300 miles from its source in the Yellowstone Lake to its junction with the Missouri. No, more fitting symbol of human life could well be found than the course of this stream. Leaving its parent like, it wanders in an aimless sort of way through scenes of enchanting beauty, lingering among its beautiful islands and its pine-fringed shores, as if lost in a dream of careless joy. Ere long, however, it leaves those tranquil scenes and emerges upon rougher courses, where opposing rocks fret its placid surface into angry eddies, and with quickened current it dashes onward beneath frowning cliffs with reckless impetuosity, until it suddenly plunges over a precipice. Then, as if sobered by its fall, it wanders on sedately for a while, but soon, heedless of past experience, it makes a wilder plunge than ever, and finds itself hemmed in by the walls of a narrow chasm, 1,000 feet high, against which it lashes itself in vain. Darker grows its course, beset with more obstinate barriers as it proceeds, ridge after ridge disputing its way. At last, however, it leaves the mountains, and flowing onward through broad and fertile valleys, at a calm, but no longer aimless pace, it reaches at last the great stream, in which it is merged and borne onward to the shoreless ocean.

The district about the Yellowstone Lake forms the water-shed of North America, so that the courses of the principal rivers can here be easily traced, some flowing on to meet the Pacific, others to meet the Atlantic; and there is said to be one stream which, after proceeding some distance, suddenly divides, one branch toward the Pacific, and the other to the Atlantic—emblematical of two lives which for a time seemed blended into one, but which some almost imperceptible divergence ere long cleaves asunder, never to unite again.





HEAD OF YELLOWSTONE RIVER.



## THE LOOKING-GLASS.

BY E. NESBIT.

SHE was a puny, yellow-skinned, big-eyed, big-mouthed child, with thin arms and legs, and brown untidy hair. The eyes were red, and the mouth tremulous with tears, when she stood alone in the world in the drawing-room of her aunt's house in Highgate, quite alone now that the friendly doctor, who had taken charge of her on her homeward voyage, had brought her to the house of her dead father's only sister; and, being a busy man, home on a short furlough after long Indian service, had kissed her, bidden her be a good girl, given her half a sovereign and a box of sweets, and left her.

The old servant who had opened the door had said that her mistress was attending a clothing-club tea-meeting—had said it with no appearance of surprise that her mistress should be absent at the hour which she herself had fixed for the arrival of her only brother's only child.

Una walked round the room, looking at the pictures in their heavy, dull maple frames: "The Woman of Samaria," "Bolton Abbey in the Olden Time," "The Maid of Saragossa." She looked at the marble top of the chiffonier, where the case of stuffed birds was, at the heavy stiff damask curtains, the sombre respectability of the Brussels carpet, the severe uninviting orderliness of the rep-covered chairs.

She looked out of the window at the garden, in intention as formal as the room itself, but where the lavish hand of autumn had scattered golden leaves, to the despair of the gardener and the littering of the lawn. It was a chill, damp outlook. Una shivered, and walked back into the room.

The chiffonier attracted her most. The stuffed birds were pretty: besides, there was at the back of them a looking-glass, in which she could see her face, her poor little pale, frightened face. There was glass in the doors of the chiffonier, too, reflecting her black stockings and the little skirts that were trimmed with crape, because it was not yet four months since jungle fever had killed father and mother. She was tired. The chairs

looked at her forbiddingly, yet with a sort of challenge, as though they dared her to sit on their neat cushions. She was too tired to accept the challenge, and too tired for the little feet to support her longer without protest.

So she sat down on the Brussels carpet in front of the looking-glass door of the chiffonier, and peered into its depths. It was a comfort to her to see her own face. That, at least, was not strange as everything else was. It was almost like having a friend there, and she sat looking at herself in the glass, and pitied herself very much indeed, as children do, and grown folks likewise.

She was lost in a sad dream of the time when the face had had a soft shoulder to rest on, kind hands to stroke it, dear lips to kiss it whenever it would; and she did not hear the door open, and her aunt come in. She had just reached out a little clammy hand, with an impulse of affection, towards the image which seemed all that was left of the old life, when her arm was caught from behind, and she sprang to her feet, literally speechless with the sudden shock.

"So you are my niece," a hard voice said; and Una, looking up, saw an elderly woman, with pale banded hair and black shawl, and a very ugly bonnet.

Una opened her lips, but the "Yes, aunt," would not pass them.

"And what are you doing sitting down there on the floor as if you were a dog?" The voice was not unkind, so Una managed to answer—

"I was looking at myself in the glass."

"Why?" asked her aunt.

"Because I like to," was Una's summary of the many reasons that had brought her to that contemplation.

"Indeed," her aunt answered. "And what is your name?"

"Una," said the child.

"Anything else?"

"Una Mary Vincent."

"Well, Mary," said her aunt, instantly adopting the name unfamiliar to her niece, "I shall not call you Una, because I think it is high-flown and romantic, and not at all suitable for a little girl."

"Mother and father called me Una," the child found courage to reply, clinging to that in the midst of the waves of terror, and loneliness, and lovelessness that were closing round her.

"Indeed," replied her aunt, as if that made no difference. "But I shall call you Mary. Now, Mary, you will have governesses and teachers, and every advantage I can give you: and I hope you will be a good girl, and not tiresome. Give me a kiss, and I will ring for Fraser to take you upstairs."

Una lifted her lips obediently, but it was a hard unresponsive cheek that they touched. There was no lingering pressure, no touch of a hand on her hair, no arm put round her for a moment, no love. She followed the old servant patiently up the steep carpeted stairs into a large dreary room, furnished with mahogany and seriousness. Left alone, she took off hat and jacket, washed her hands and face, and did her hair as well as she could at the big looking-glass between the two deep windows.

It was growing dusk: she did not like the big room; she hastened down to her aunt. There was tea—a silent meal. Then Aunt Mary gave her a bound volume of the "Monthly Packet," and turned herself to wrestle with a number of little account books in mottled paper covers. Bedtime came all too soon, a bedtime that meant loneliness in the big dark, quiet chamber. Una's heart beat with terror when she found herself alone there, with the one candle. She undressed very quickly, trying to encourage herself by saying over as quickly as she could all the texts and hymns she could remember, in a vague hope that they might act as a charm against what might be lurking invisible around her, ready to spring into active, horrible, material existence as soon as the light was blown out.

Once in bed, kind Nature remembered the child for whom no one else in all the busy living world had any thought in that hour, and rocked her sweetly and swiftly into dreamless sleep.

Next day a prim but kindly governess appeared. For the first time Una found in sums and geography a refuge from her bitter longing for love,

and from the bleak waste of misery that life had become to her. When she went up to wash her hands for tea, she found that the big dressing-table, with its large swinging-glass, was gone. When she came down, she said timidly to the aunt who sat waiting behind the tea-tray—

"There is no looking-glass in my room, aunt. How am I to do my hair?"

"You must learn to do without a glass," her aunt replied, beginning to pour out the tea with grim rigidity. "I didn't say anything to you about it yesterday, because you were tired, and I didn't wish to be too severe with you: but I must tell you I was very much shocked to find you indulging in foolish vanity before the looking-glass. You will have no glass for the future."

"Yes, aunt," said the child meekly, climbing on to the large horsehair chair and smoothing her pinafore down over her black frock.

"Will you please pass me the bread and butter?" the aunt went on. "You must learn to be very obliging and agreeable, Mary, and think no more about looking glasses and such vanities. Remember that you are an extremely plain child. You will grow up to be a very plain woman. From what I have seen of you I am quite sure that you will never be a clever one. So you must be good and obedient or no one will ever love you. You will certainly not be loved for your looks or your cleverness."

"No, aunt," Una answered, choking down bitter tears with the bread and butter.

"It will be no fault of mine," said Miss Vincent complacently to herself as she sat alone that night over the clothing club accounts, "It will not be my fault if she grows up vain and frivolous. I will do my duty by her whatever it costs me."

And she did. She was a woman in whom duty took the place of faith and hope and charity. She saw that Una was well clothed, and sufficiently fed. She saw that Una was well taught and had regular daily exercise in the open air. She took her to Church. She taught her her catechism and at the proper age she had her taken to the bishop to be confirmed. All this care Miss Vincent gave ungrudgingly. More than this she had not in her to give.

So Una grew up a silent, awkward girl, more and more finding her pleasure in learning and reading. There were no books of a frivolous character at

Miss Vincent's It was a sympathetic housemaid who gave Una a copy of Longfellow, furtively, on her fifteenth birthday, and the same housemaid at her request bought her Mrs. Hemans and Scott, and a vilely printed edition of Shakespeare, with the ten shillings the doctor had given her at parting five years before. She had not spent the ten shillings; she had nothing to spend it on. All her material wants were supplied, and Miss Vincent would not have approved of any catering for spiritual needs beyond the official banquet of prayerbook, hymnbook, and sermon.

So Una hid her poetry books on the top of the big wardrobe and read and re-read them.

After that first day she had never looked in the glass. At first from the blind instinct of obedience, which ten years of loving care had made strong within her, afterwards because the memory of her aunt's words to her rankled in a wound that never healed.

"No one will ever love me. I am not good. I shall never be clever. I must always be ugly. I don't want to see an ugly stupid person's face."

And not to look in any glass in any room at any time became a habit, stronger than any resolution could have been, and she grew up, learned for her years and thoughtful, taking her part in Miss Vincent's mothers' meetings and the acts of duty, misnamed charities, till it seemed to her as if the world must always, always go on just like this, with nothing in it beautiful except the flowers in their seasons in the dull garden, the memory of those ten years in India, and the contraband poetry books on the top of the mahogany wardrobe.

She still read with her governess, though she had long out-stripped that worthy woman's little round of learning and accomplishments. She kissed her aunt morning and evening, but after Betty, the housemaid, left, there were none in whom she could confide even to the point of stretching her arms in their presence when she was weary, or sighing in their presence when she was sad. And she was sad so often, yet not with the bitterness of those first days, because one can get used to any pain, even the pain of loneliness and of a loveless life.

It was when the housemaid left that Una first began to write poetry, furtively, with one of her drawing pencils in the blank spaces of an old exercise book filled up with vulgar fractions. And

her poems were echoes of the poetry she had read, and rough and bad and poor, yet with an individual note, and the very first line of the very first poem began:—"I know that I am ugly." Una has that poem still, but it is under seal, and even now she never has the heart to look at it; and gradually out of the world whose one great fact was that she was ugly and therefore no one would ever love her, she passed into the other world where all things were beautiful, and therefore she loved them; so with the poetry she wrote and the poetry she read, she built herself a dream palace in which as the days passed by, their dull duties and routines became the dream, and her beautiful bright dreams the only reality.

No visitors came to the house except the prim ladies who brought their scissors and thimbles and sat seriously sewing through the Wednesday afternoons, while an improving book was read aloud. Una was as much alone as though she never touched a human hand or saw a human face. Then quite without warning the change came.

Miss Vincent died, died suddenly, sitting upright at her table, working at the accounts in the little marble-covered account books, died with her pen in her hand and with anxious eyes tracking through the long columns a missing fourpence half-penny. They found her there in the morning when they came in to unbar the shutters and remove the slight traces of yesterday's dull life from carpet and chair and fender.

They went up and told Una without preface or hesitation.

"Get up, Miss Mary!" the housemaid said, "your poor aunt is dead."

And Una got up. She did not run down to see the worst for herself, in dressing gown and slippers; but she dressed quickly with all the customary routine of the toilet, and as on other mornings brushed out her long hair and twisted it up, looking all the while out of the window. It was a bright May morning. There were two blackbirds on the wet lawn. Then she said her prayers, because she had always been used to say them, and went downstairs.

The doctor was there. They had laid Miss Vincent on the table and covered her with a sheet. The doctor was arranging its folds over the dead face when Una came in.

"The poor lady's niece," said the cook, intro-

ducing them. "The doctor, Miss Mary, he says it's all over."

Una turned away and went into the drawing-room. She stood there, gazing out of the window, the tears slowly rolling down her face, with an ache of heart, just as though she had loved the hard woman who lay cold under a sheet across the hall. Perhaps she had, without knowing it, for love is a plant which grows in strange places and with little to feed it. The doctor's voice roused her.

"Come, my dear," he said, "you must cheer up. Is there no one you can send for?"

"No one," said Una.

He meditated a moment.

"I don't like leaving you all alone in this big, sad house," he said.

He was a white-bearded old man, with a shining bald head and friendly eyes.

"I must send my wife to keep you company."

And Una, who could not understand her own tears, let him go without a word. It seemed to her that no time had passed, or else a very, very long time indeed, so long that one might well lose count of it, when the door opened, and a stout, rosy-cheeked old lady, with little white curls on each side of her smooth forehead, came into the room. She made two steps forward, hesitated, then came right up to the forlorn little figure by the window, and, quite simply, as if it were the most common thing in the world, took Una in her arms and kissed her again and again.

"You poor little thing," she said, "you must come home with me."

And Una, still stunned, obeyed.

They gave her the best room at the doctor's, and the doctor's wife waited on her and fed her, and petted her as though she had been indeed one of the children that had lain, in the old times, on that motherly breast, and Una's soul drank in the love as a thirsty flower drinks dew.

Miss Vincent was buried, and the will read, and Una knew that her aunt's money was hers, and that she was her own mistress; yet the weeks went by, and still she stayed in her new home with the new happiness that not even her books or her dreams had pictured for her. She was not clever—oh, no; she was not pretty either: she was not—she knew too well—even good. Yet here was someone who loved her.

It was when she had been there a month that

the doctor's wife looked up from her pile of letters at breakfast with a new joy in her face.

"My son is coming home," she said. "He will be here, he says, almost as soon as his letter. He has got a year's leave. Oh! my dear, what a happy old woman I am! the happiest in the world!"

And the doctor at the other end of the table took his spectacles off and wiped them—to have a good look, as he said, at the happiest woman in the world.

All this time Una had never looked in the glass. "They love me here," she said to herself, "so what does it matter how I look?"

That night, as they sat round the fire—for the evenings were still chilly, though it was early June—the rumble of wheels came up the road. The doctor's wife, throwing her sixty years behind her, rushed to the door. There was a sound of hurried inquiries, of kisses, of luggage being set down in the hall, a chink of money as the cab was paid, and then the doctor's wife, with pink roses in her own pretty old face and stars of joy in her faded eyes, came into the room, leading a handsome, bronzed, soldierly man.

"This is my boy, Una," she said. "Francis, this is my dear girl!"

And as he came across the room, holding out a brown hand, and looking at Una with frank, blue eyes, her own dropped before them, and she wished with a little pang, and for the first time for years, that it had pleased Fate to make her a little better, not quite so stupid, not quite so ugly.

A month later the great happiness of life came to her, when those blue eyes looked closely into hers, and those strong hands held her own.

"But is it possible," she cried, "that you really can care, that you really want me? I am so—so—" she could not say it. Why should she tell him that she was ugly and stupid and not very good, if he did not see these things? Or perhaps he saw them and did not mind. So she said "Yes" to his questions, because she had given him her heart, four weeks ago, in exchange for the first look from those blue eyes of his.

They had been married three weeks and the honeymoon was in its last quarter, and in the little lodgings at Hythe, Una was twisting up the long dark hair, still damp and salt with the sea.

Her husband watched her with loving pride.

"Una, my heart," he said, "have you made a vow of humility, that you never look in the glass? You always look out of the window when you are twisting up that dear hair of yours. Why is it?"

Una did not answer. She twisted up her hair, and, when the last hairpin was in its place, she came and knelt beside her husband, and laid her soft cheek against his shoulder.

Then she told him the whole tale, as I have told it to you, and she showed him her poems which I cannot show you, but you can get them from Mudie's for yourselves, and when he had looked through them and heard all her tale, he clasped her in his arms and kissed her a hundred times.

"You not good? you not clever? you not pretty? my beauty, my pride, my heart's delight! Come with me and let me show you how beautiful my wife is!"

He led her to the little gold-framed looking-

glass above the sitting-room mantelpiece.

"There," he said.

He looked and she looked. The looking-glass reflected his fair hair and strong face, and on his shoulder the rough brown head of his wife. But she did not look at her low broad forehead, her arched brows and beautiful dreamy passionate eyes. She did not see the sensitive soft lipped mouth, the round softness of the firm chin, and the faint shell-pink tint of the smooth cheeks. Her eyes met his in the glass, and she answered the word she read in them.

"Am I?" she said. "Really? And you are pleased?"

He turned and kissed her again. "Look at yourself, Una," he said.

She flung her arms round his neck. "No, why should I look there? Why should I wish to see myself, when I can see you, my Dear?"





BY C. BAIN.

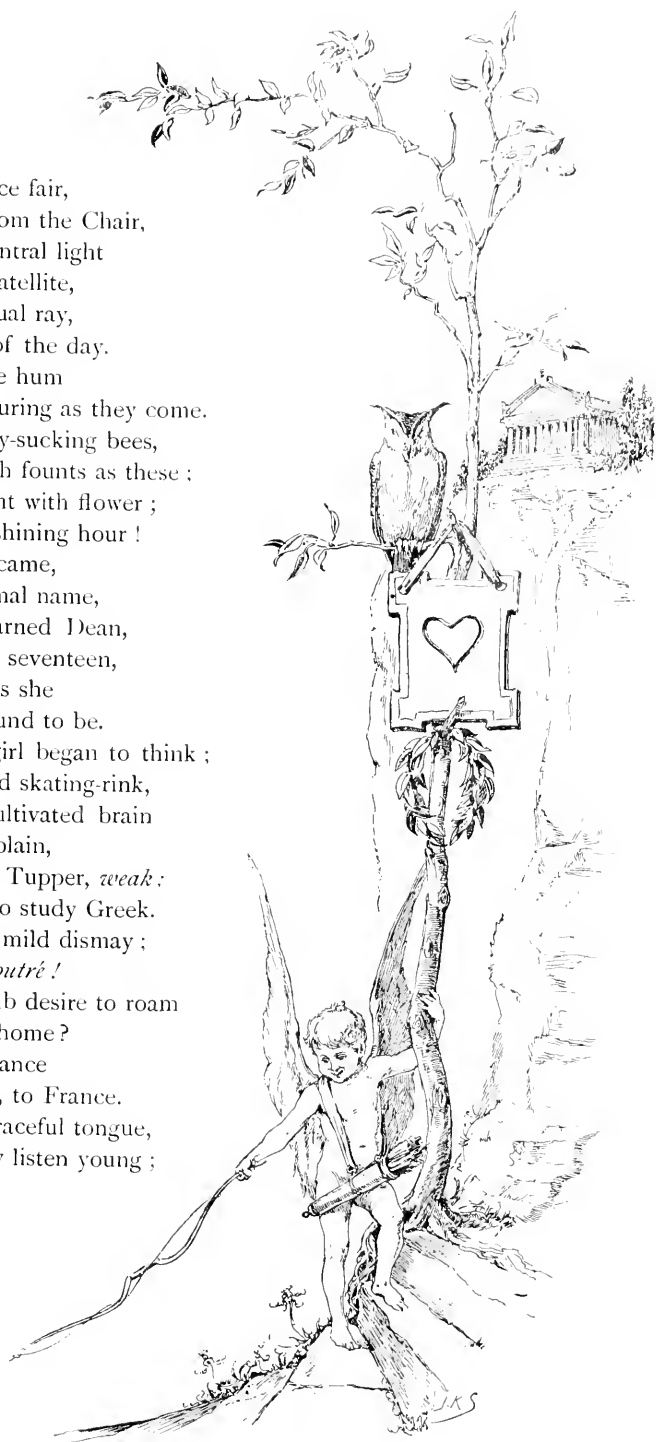
WHEN Shenstone's charming picture we behold,

The worthy Schoolmistress who reigned of old,  
Seated amid a small unruly band,  
The rod of office in her wrinkled hand,  
(A sprig of baleful birch, wherewith to tame  
Rebellious wights, impervious to shame)  
We greet the quaint old vision with a sigh  
For simple fashions of a day gone by,  
When Culture walked with even pace and slow,  
And there was time for everything to grow !  
We've changed all that—the rosebud is full blown !  
We've hatched our Cuckoo, and the bird has  
flown !

O'er all the land his message-note is heard,  
'Tis a whole Gospel in one pregnant word,  
Password imperative to High Career,  
High principles, of course—*Cela va sans dire* !  
High Art, High Church, High farming, and High  
Schools :

With high per centage (cynics say) of fools !  
See the High Priestess of the age's whim :  
A lively Vestal, well equipped and trim.  
"In mean attire ?" No, no, she's *cap-à-pie*.  
The "lowly shed beneath a birchen tree"

Is now a many-chambered palace fair,  
 Where she dispenses Culture from the Chair,  
 Sun of her system, in whose central light  
 Basks many a small revolving satellite,  
 Each twinkling with an individual ray,  
 Sweetness and light the order of the day.  
 Hark to the vague, innumerable hum  
 Of crowding youngsters, murmuring as they come.  
 They swarm around, dear honey-sucking bees,  
 Keen to sip sweetness from such founts as these ;  
 Their pastures wait, all succulent with flower ;  
 Up, insects ! and improve the shining hour !  
 A Peri to these gates of Eden came,  
 Honoria was her choice baptismal name,  
 The youngest daughter of a learned Dean,  
 Just like her sisters up to sweet seventeen,  
 As naughty, nice, and natural as she  
 Who sits in Fortune's lap is bound to be.  
 Then glimmered change : the girl began to think ;  
 Forsook the croquet ground and skating-rink,  
 Brushed back her curls, and cultivated brain  
 In any kind of frock, severely plain,  
 Tossed novels all aside—called Tupper, *weak* :  
 And asked her mother's leave to study Greek.  
 The Deanery owned a thrill of mild dismay ;  
 Eccentric it was voted—odd—*outré* !  
 Why should the Dean's pet lamb desire to roam  
 Beyond the juicy pasturage of home ?  
 To mitigate such terrible mischance  
 They sent her, with a chaperon, to France.  
 She caught the accent of the graceful tongue,  
 As ears best catch it, when they listen young ;  
 Devoted studious days to  
     Lamartine,  
 And learned by heart whole  
     pages of Racine.

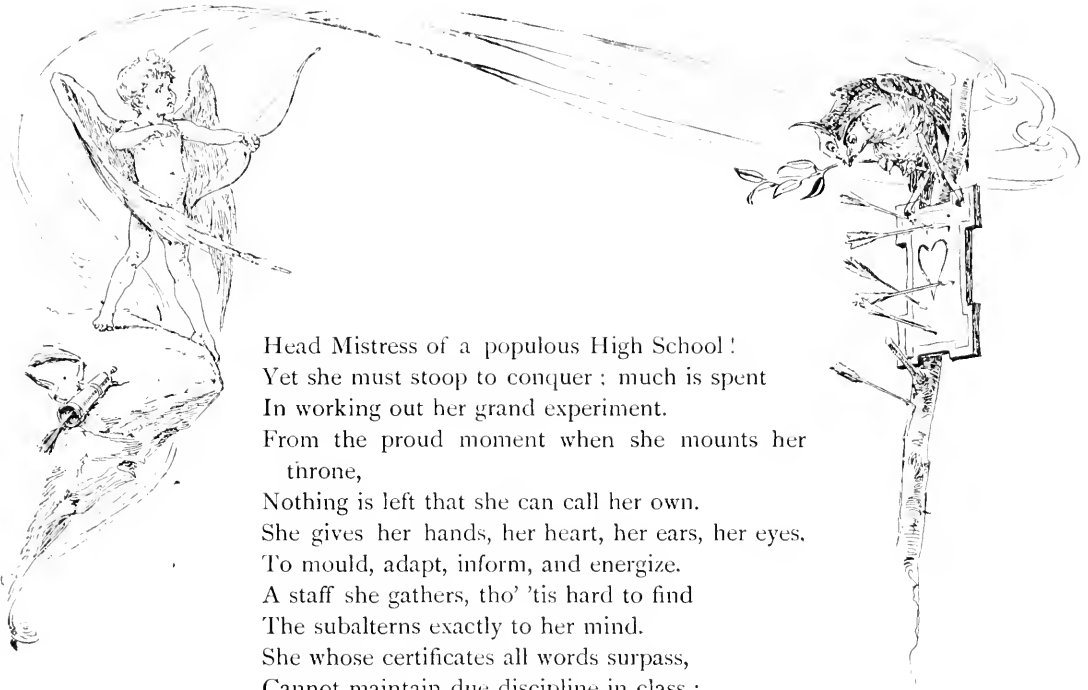




But still athirst, she yearned to drink her fill  
 At deeper founts—deeper and deeper still.  
 Her cousin Walter stole a side-long glance,  
 Ere he besought Miss Blue-stocking to dance,  
 But met the gaze of lovely liquid eyes  
 With mixed emotions, tintured with surprise,  
 And viewing matters in a higher light,  
 He soon felt sure that Honor must be right,  
 And spoke with generous warmth, too rare in man,  
 “Why should not ladies study while they can?  
 A little Greek will do the girl no hurt!  
 Better a Grecian than an empty flirt!  
 Why should a clever woman cease to please  
 Because she communes with Thucydides?  
 There lie my books, all idle on the shelf,

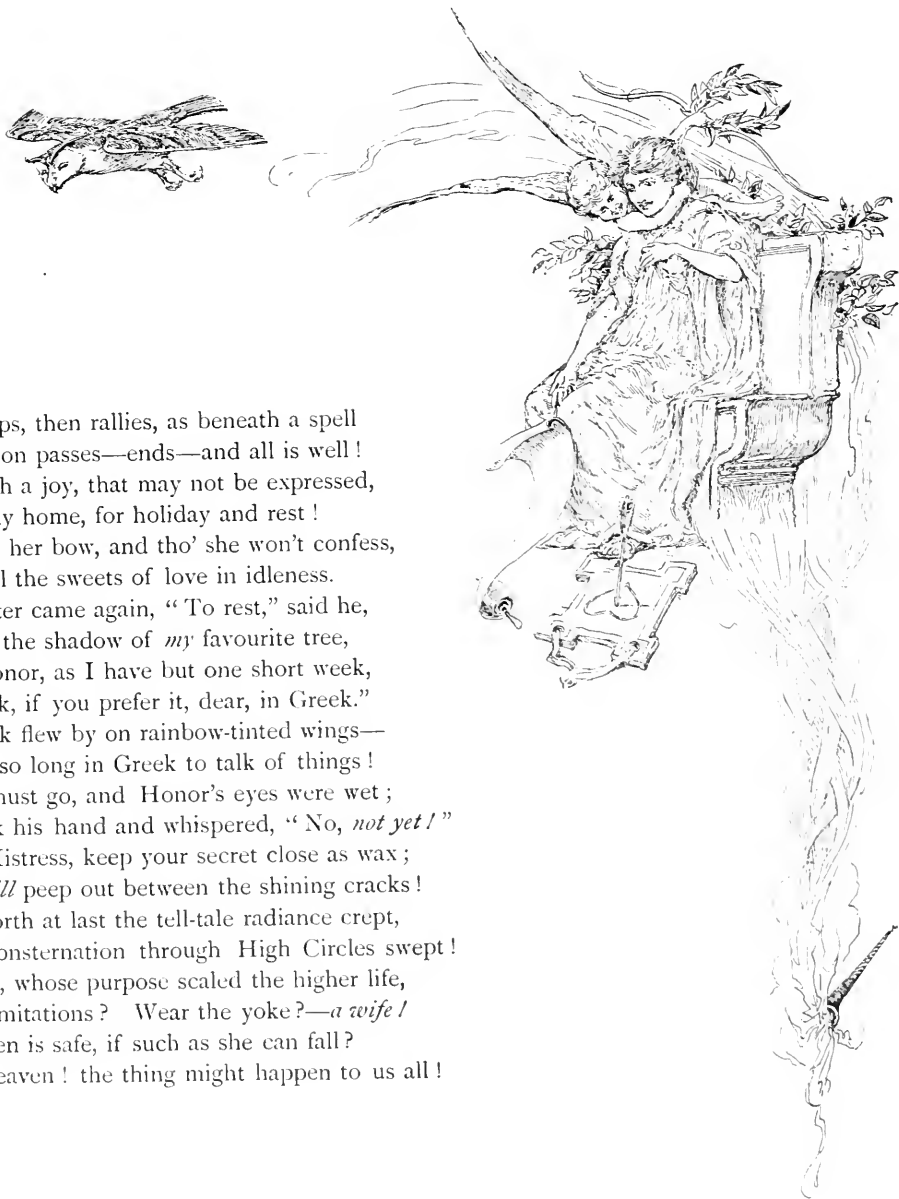
With the Dean’s leave, I’ll coach the girl myself!”  
 Papa, hard-pressed, unwillingly agreed  
 The much-debated question to concede;  
 And, after all, no mischief need be done,  
 For Cousin Walter was an eldest son,  
 And wise paternal providence foresaw  
 A possibly appropriate son-in-law.  
 So Greek progressed, as the shrewd Dean divined,  
 Walter grew fond, but Honor proved unkind,  
 With icy sweetness she dismissed his suit,  
 Her life was planned—her plan was absolute.  
 Marriage, like all provisionary things,  
 Befitted souls, she said, in leading strings.  
 Unfettered she must soar—’twould cause her pain  
 If ever Walter broached the thing again.  
 She loved the Race, but her inclusive plan  
 Did not include the individual man!  
 Walter withdrew—half angry, half amused—  
 All is not lost, though one sweet boon’s refused;  
 And cruel fair ones, so old legends say,  
 Have sometimes rued the first impetuous “Nay!”  
 As thus he communed with his aching heart,  
 While Honor, ’neath a lime tree, mused apart,  
 She gaily cried, “This shall my emblem be,  
 A lime in blossom! ’tis my favourite tree!  
 Under this shadow hovers many a guest.  
 Here’s honey, music, and a wild bird’s nest,  
 A crowd of working bees, and shelter sweet,  
 From earthly dust and din, for weary feet.”  
 “’Tis woman’s influence, Honor, and divine,  
 And all were yours,” cried he, “if you were mine!”  
 She laughed and blushed, and shook her graceful  
 head,  
 “O! I’ve a loftier dream than that,” she said.  
 And so they parted. He to Cambridge went  
 To read for honours there—half-discontent.  
 Honours achieved, what might not patience do?  
 Honor herself, perchance, be compassed too.  
 Meanwhile, on other thoughts intent, she flies  
 To wrestle boldly with the Ologies;  
 Dons all her maiden armour for the fray,  
 And tackles posers till they fade away.  
 At last she pauses, breathless, bright, and bland,  
 Oxford’s diploma in her well-gloved hand.  
 So before each life’s curtain lifts, and lo!  
 Duty’s stern finger points, and forth they go—  
 He, his first cure to serve, and she, to rule





Head Mistress of a populous High School !  
 Yet she must stoop to conquer : much is spent  
 In working out her grand experiment.  
 From the proud moment when she mounts her  
     throne,  
 Nothing is left that she can call her own.  
 She gives her hands, her heart, her ears, her eyes.  
 To mould, adapt, inform, and energize.  
 A staff she gathers, tho' 'tis hard to find  
 The subalterns exactly to her mind.  
 She whose certificates all words surpass,  
 Cannot maintain due discipline in class ;  
 While she who holds it with her glittering eye  
 Is rude and harsh, and makes the young ones cry.  
 French accent unimpeachable must be ;  
 The tongue that boasts it, wags a thought too free.  
 Fastidious Honor listens with a pang  
 To shibboleths of mild scholastic slang ;  
 And frowns disdainful over " Crib " and " Cram,"  
 While working up her pupils for " Exam."  
 The leader of historical research  
 Smiles at the Creeds, and never goes to Church ;  
 While she whose morals are distinctly best,  
 Quarrels all round, and is denounced a pest.  
 Now for diplomacy and nimble wits !  
 To place each peg in just the hole it fits !  
 To drive a team with cool and dexterous hand  
 Over a tract of rough, uncultured land ;  
 To waken up some dullard's sluggish brain ;  
 To winnow chaff and store the precious grain ;  
 With living stones to build a temple, meet  
 For royal Culture's high and holy seat.  
 So labours Honor, counting not the cost  
 (Nor shall it e'er be said, Love's labour's lost),  
 And through that labour learns, with sad surprise,  
 The stern necessity for compromise.  
 Learns to endure, in silence and alone,  
 The fierce white light that beats upon a throne.

She droops, then rallies, as beneath a spell  
 The session passes—ends—and all is well !  
 Then with a joy, that may not be expressed,  
 Flies away home, for holiday and rest !  
 Unbends her bow, and tho' she won't confess,  
 Tastes all the sweets of love in idleness.  
 For Walter came again, "To rest," said he,  
 "Under the shadow of *my* favourite tree,  
 And, Honor, as I have but one short week,  
 We'll talk, if you prefer it, dear, in Greek."  
 The week flew by on rainbow-tinted wings—  
 It takes so long in Greek to talk of things !  
 Walter must go, and Honor's eyes were wet ;  
 She took his hand and whispered, "No, *not yet !*"  
 Sweet Mistress, keep your secret close as wax ;  
 Love *will* peep out between the shining cracks !  
 When forth at last the tell-tale radiance crept,  
 What consternation through High Circles swept !  
 Can she, whose purpose scaled the higher life,  
 Court limitations ? Wear the yoke ?—*a wife !*  
 Who then is safe, if such as she can fall ?  
 Great heaven ! the thing might happen to us all !





## “Beloved! amidst the Earnest Woes.”

Words by EDGAR ALLAN POE.

Music by W. AUGUSTUS BARRATT.

*Andantino, con espressione.*  $\text{p}$

VOICE. Be - lov - ed! a - midst the

PIANO. *Con Ped.*

earn - est woes..... That crowd a - round my earth - ly

*p*

path,..... Drear path, a - las ! where grows Not ev'n one

lone - ly rose ;..... My soul..... at least..... the

*p*

*Con Ped.*

*p* *cres.*

sol - ace bath,..... In dreams of thee ; And

*f*

there - in knows an E - den, And there - in knows an E - den of

*p rall.*

bland..... re - pose.....

*p colla voce.* *pp*

*p*

And thus thy mem - - 'ry is to me.....

*p*

..... Like some en - chant - ed, far - off isle,.....

*cres.* *cres.*

..... In some tu - - mul-tuous sea, Some o - - cean throb-bing

*cres.* *cres.*

far and free,..... But where mean - while, con -

*mp*

- tin - ual - ly, But where mean - while, con -

*p*

- tin - ual - ly,..... se - re - nest skies Just o'er that

*f*

one bright is - - - land smile.....

*pp molto rallentando.*

*colla voce.* *mp* *pp*



## A COSTLY FREAK.

BY MAXWELL GRAY,

*Author of "The Silence of Dean Maitland."*

### CHAPTER V.

NEVER before had the good folk of Freshford heard such a sermon from their curate as on that Sunday morning. The marquis, consumed with wrath and indignation against the rebellious rector, was present, probably, the latter reflected, out of pure spite, deeply pondering the possibility of retracting his gift, since what he intended as its condition had been impudently disregarded by its recipient. But even the marquis' naturally rocky and unnaturally hardened heart was almost touched in its least indurated part by this sermon, and he went away grumbling to himself: "After all, the beggar can preach, and young Burroughes is not such a fool as not to know what a stick he is himself."

"I always had a weakness for your curate, George," Maud Ascott commented, "but I had no idea he could be eloquent."

As for George, he came very near to choking once or twice, and was glad of the shelter of his surplice as he rested his elbow on the choir-stall during that morning's discourse. All the time his mental gaze was occupied by the piteous, helpless quivering of the old man's chin, and he heard his bitter, self-accusing cry that he had put Walter before his soul and the souls of his people.

Yet it was difficult to believe that the old man, whose strong but helpless anguish and uncontrollable tears had so wrought upon George's heart in the chill twilight parlour two days ago, was the same as this erect, inspired preacher, pouring forth, without check or misgiving, the enthusiasm of a triumphant faith. All the dignity, but none of the weakness, of grey hairs was here, the man's eyes glowed with a deep and steady fire, his face was radiant with a light not of this world—like the first martyr's face, "as of an angel"—a light such as illumines one who has beheld the Unseen and yet lived; his voice was full and deep, being naturally thin and plaintive, even reedy; his unsought words were noble and fell spontaneously into musical rhythm of nicely balanced sentence; his imagery was simple and lofty, though, in spite of his wife's warning, he was preaching straight from his overflowing heart—extempore, without so much as a note before him. Therefore, his delivery was majestic, and enchained the attention. There was to-day no hesitation, no near-sighted peering into manuscript, no groping after words, no timidity of expression, no fettering self-consciousness, no fear of being misunderstood. Tears there were, once or twice, the restrained tears of noble feeling—not the helpless overflowing of grief—but no faltering, no breaking of the steady voice, which

rose and fell with unaccustomed and unpremeditated music and emphasis. He exhorted the people to be very bold in prayer, to pray even for little things. Nothing could be small or trivial in the sight of the Infinite, to whom the sparrow's wing and the single hair on the disciple's head are as much objects of care as the starry universe with its solar systems and galaxies of innumerable worlds: nothing could be small in the sight of One to whom all things are small, and the nations a very little thing—a drop in a bucket. But to man, that frail and fleeting guest, who tarries but for a night and in the morning is seen no more, who doth fade as a leaf and is fashioned out of the dust to which he must soon return, small things are often great; a drop of water, a few grains of powder, may be to him as life and death, being and not being. Therefore let no one hesitate to ask in faith for the meanest necessity. St. Augustine prayed once to be delivered from pains in his teeth. The Gospel miracles were wrought upon such things as pots of water, a loaf, a fish, a coin. Through channels apparently so trivial and homely divine glory may be conveyed to the soul of man. Therefore, let no Christian man conceal any lawful desire from his Maker, but express all in fervent prayer. For in those very needs and desires, sometimes strangely and unaccountably, to the eye of flesh, withheld from the just and devout, lies the medium through which the soul of man may most fitly and closely commune with the Highest. Nay, let no man stagger at the thought; even the impossible, the earthly impossible, might be supplicated by the prayer of faith—that is if the earthly impossible were needful and lawful. For the age of miracles is not past, and wonders are still daily wrought for the humble and devout—every day the hungry are filled with good things and the rich sent empty away. Therefore, let all men pray, and pray fervently, faithfully, humbly, and without ceasing.

“For what are men better than sheep or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer,  
Both for themselves and those that call them friend?  
For so the whole round world is every way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.”

The prayer of faith is always answered: there is no shadow of doubt upon that subject.

Upon this he waxed fervent, speaking with a

subdued exultation and meek triumph that carried his hearers away. And when he left the pulpit, he was like a man in a trance, unconscious of his own existence, with the rapt, transfigured look still upon his face and an unaccustomed dignity in his bearing. Freshford Church was not visible to his far-off gaze, its solid pillars, its Saxon arches, and secular stone walls melted into air: Heaven was opened, the Unseen made visible even to eyes of flesh. But of the customary evangelical shibboleth, of which the young rector was so intolerant, there was to-day no trace. For never before or after did Mr. Ray preach as on that Sunday morning in the uplifting of his thankful spirit.

George was so deeply impressed and subdued, that he scarcely ventured to speak to the man he had summarily discharged and in sudden pity retained, two days ago. Silently he stood by him in the clergyman's vestry, when the offertory had been brought in and counted and the churchwardens were gone, silently he looked at the still, rapt face and over-brilliant eyes that saw nothing earthly, and silently he wondered whence this sudden burst of eloquence and fiery exaltation had come. What if Isaiah had been, in his uninspired moments, a shabby, depressed, hesitating old man—with a shibboleth? For undoubtedly divine fire—the live coal from the altar—must have touched those feeble and hesitating lips, used to utter platitude, shibboleth, and outworn phrase with painful effort and uncertain accent, before they poured forth that torrent of living, burning, triumphant, yet simple eloquence.

“Sir,” said the young rector, with a deference unobserved by its object, “permit me—ah!—your coat.” For Mr. Ray, sublimely heedless of sub-lunary matters, was faring forth into the February blast in the cassock with which he had so long and so stoutly objected to invest his evangelical form. He now submitted with a gentle smile and abstracted air to be helped out of this priestly vestment and into the coat and waistcoat of old-fashioned clerical cut, in his eyes so seemly, while George, observing that these were cheap and worn as he handled them, said gravely in his deep voice, “Thank you,” to Mr. Ray's momentary wonderment.

George scarcely spoke at luncheon, during which phrases and sentences from the curate's remarkable



sermon ran in his head and set up long and earnest trains of thought.

"But do you think he is right, George?" his mother asked, referring to the sermon. "Why, he would have us pray for a new gown or coat."

"I am incompetent to judge the words of such a man," George replied, "the least one can do is to listen humbly, and dumbly."

And even Maud, the garrulous Maud, said nothing, but her eyes glittered with an unusual moisture, of which she was desperately ashamed.

The odours of the afternoon Sunday school, well packed with scholars, were, by the time the preliminary hum of voices and clatter of footsteps had subsided, a prayer been said, and a hymn shouted by a hundred pairs of young lungs, anything but those of sanctity in the fastidious nostrils of Mr. Burroughes. When the last drone of the harmonium ceased, and the scholars stumped and rustled to their places, he took out a nicely scented handkerchief, uttered a subdued "Pouff!" and looked round with "an eye like Mars," to see sundry victims making faces behind teachers' backs, sucking contraband mint-drops and distributing clandestine jokes, pinches and kicks, and openly "cheeking" harassed and helpless teachers, displaying, in short, the varied charm and resourceful power of distracting inherent to the free and independent Sunday scholar, unfettered by week-day discipline.

Rapidly confiscating three pea-shooters, a catapult, a peg-top, some half-eaten apples, and various sticky confections of sweet-stuff, standing two girls on forms, boxing the ears of three boys—he moved through the classes, scattering desolation and comparative good behaviour in his path, and reached the rear of Millie Ray's class of half-grown boys just as it had occurred to those pleasant fellows to bring all their nailed boots down in one simultaneous stamp on the wooden floor, with the delightful result of causing Millie to start visibly with a rush of tears to her tired eyes.

But a deep and angry "Stand all," from behind them, reversed the pleasantry, and made the jesters start in their turn and gaze with open mouths and eyes at the stern face and strong figure of George, who stood in their midst silent, and content with the silence he had created for a space.

"Freshford chivalry!" he observed, sarcastically. "This is a pretty way of thanking ladies

for giving up their time and comfort to a set of unlicked louts, with neither manners, gratitude, nor self-respect. Miss Ray shall not be annoyed in this manner. The class is disgraced."

Summary justice having, in spite of Millie's stout defence of her flock and pleading of exceptional and extenuating circumstances, been meted out to these culprits, Millie was informed that Mrs. Burroughes wanted to see her that afternoon, and supplicated to convey a note from her son to that innocent lady, who had, it must be confessed, not the least desire for the society of a young lady whom she supposed to be decorously passing her Sunday afternoon in teaching in the school.

Millie was not very sorry to have the unexpected holiday afforded by her disgraced class: it was pleasanter to sit by a cheery fire in a comfortable chair and listen to Mrs. Burroughes and her niece and visitors talking—so pleasant, that she seemed scarcely to have been in the warm, flower-scented atmosphere of the pretty bay-windowed room five minutes, when there was a sharp rustle of crisp evergreens outside, a quick step on the gravel, and George came in through the garden door and the little ante-room, and, before Millie quite realised the situation, she found herself the centre of a cosy tea-party, flavoured by a spicy suggestion of Sabbatical unlawfulness. Two visitors besides herself, all talking as gaily as if Sunday solemnity had never been invented, secular books discussed, secular prints and photographs handed round, gentle explosions of laughter, references to mundane matters and occupations and week-day events, in which Millie snatched a fearful joy, and caught herself thinking how much more spacious and airy life would be if Sunday were not made a prison-day of dull vacuity out of church.

"Oh! I must go!" she cried, in her abrupt way, when the visitors left.

"I don't see the need," George replied, helping himself with youthful recklessness to muffin; "you've not said a word to us yet. Nobody can when the Milfords are present. Delightful girls; any amount of go in them. Besides, you can't go home alone, and I'm not half through my tea yet. Do have another cup and a scone. Maud, have you left me any pound-cake? Sunday makes us all as hungry as wolves."

"The unusual sense of virtue is so stimulating," Maud explained, drawing her chair cosily to

the fire. "I must say I like these quiet Freshford Sundays—for a change!"

The afternoon was drawing gloomily to an end with a dank fog that made the trees drip and emphasized the comfort and warmth of the bright and glowing room. Millie's chair was a magnet to her tired body; another cup of tea quieted her nerves more completely; the voices of the cousins fell with subduing charm on her ear; she watched the lights quiver and flash from the rings on Mrs. Burroughes' placidly-clasped hands: a sudden sense of happiness, or, perhaps, more truly, of possibilities of happiness, fell upon her. The cousins' voices ceased: an angel must have passed by, for they were all contentedly silent—so silent, that the clock's steady ticking, the crackle of flame and tinkle of falling cinders within, and tap of frosted sprays on the windows and rustle of evergreens without, were audible.

"As a rule," George observed, abruptly breaking the pleasant silence, presently, "girls are worse liars than boys."

"My *dear* George!" exclaimed his mother, startled from agreeable musings.

"Especially at from twelve to fifteen," he continued. "Purposeless lying, I mean, and seemingly unconscious. A boy seldom reels off an unnecessary yarn on the spur of the moment."

"His reverence discourses on lying," his cousin commented. "My good George, is this the evening's rehearsal?"

"This afternoon's reminiscence," he replied. "*A propos* of which, I think, Miss Ray, that you ought to know what outrageous romances that little Bella of yours makes about you. It ought to be checked."

"Oh! but Bella is truth itself, Mr. Burroughes," Millie objected.

Then it came out that Bella, in the Sunday School, held up her hand at a question for an instance of answered prayer, and said that her master had prayed overnight for certain things which had been sent him next morning—a warm coat, a barrel of oysters, a basket of wine, and a chicken. Whereupon, being sternly told not to publish what went on at her master's house, Bella wept and lamented herself.

"Poor child!" Millie said. "But it is quite true. My father did pray very earnestly for means to procure comforts necessary for Walter, and these

things actually came mysteriously yesterday. You heard his sermon."

Millie spoke with matter-of-fact simplicity, as if confirming the most ordinary piece of intelligence. Her listeners were silent. The cinders tinkled softly, the evergreens pattered lightly, the rose-sprays tapped listlessly on the window-pane; a gust of wind rose and shrieked round the house, the clocked ticked and chimed a musical quarter. Millie loved that clock. Maud Ascott rose and moved to the window with averted face; George coughed.

"My *dear*!" said Mrs. Burroughes at last, in a moved voice, to her young guest.

"We heard his sermon," George replied, with a blank-verse intonation.

"The things came anonymously, and at different times," Millie continued. "Dear father thinks they came straight from heaven. Not, of course, that it makes any difference how they came. He expects to have all that Walter needs. Oh! I *must* go."

Conscience sadly reproached Millie for the rest and quiet enjoyment of that Sunday afternoon. She had actually been out to tea, though without premeditation. She had been amused and refreshed; she had done no work whatever; if she did not make haste she would not be in time to wash the family tea-cups, and her mother would have to do all herself. Walter had not had the dripping toast she had intended making him. How delightful life would be if things generally, and especially pleasant things, were not sinful.

The lamp smelt more than usual that evening, and there was a curious desolation about the dingy parlour in which she and Walter kept each other company while the family were at church. Millie dutifully read the psalms and lessons to her brother, also the evening prayer, but this did not take long, and even during that short time her attention wandered more than once.

"It was kind of him, but I ought to have fought it out alone with the boys," she said, referring to the Sunday school incident, and seeing George's indignant face and hearing the great change in his voice when he spoke to her, "yes, he is a kind man, and I must say, Wattie, that it was very pleasant to get an unexpected holiday. I begin to like Mrs. Burroughes, and Maud Ascott improves on acquaintance—especially in conjunction with

pound-cake and lovely tea with cream in it. One mustn't be prejudiced, Wat."

"You women are so whimsical," her brother piped in his small treble, "Old Burroughes always was a brick, only you wouldn't have it. Maud Ascott always was the jolliest girl out, only you couldn't see it. And they're no end of spoons on each other."

Millie stooped to pick up a cinder with the tongs, so that her face was reddened by the dull fire before which she was kneeling, but, in doing this, she upset the poker with a clatter in the immediate vicinity of Buffie, who started from his slumbers with a squeal and immediately had his ears boxed by the kitten, always on the look out for an opportunity to plague him.

"Oh!" said Millie, thoughtfully arranging the fire irons, and feeling as if everything had suddenly turned grey, "I hear people coming home from church, I think."

It occurred to her that she was very tired; no wonder that very gentle "You look tired" had escaped Mr. Burroughes in the afternoon. Strong, healthy men hate to see girls looking tired. But few strong men were kind and considerate as he; what low and tender tones were in that deep, hearty voice of his. A pitiful-hearted man, so good to Walter. Did the cousins' off-hand, bantering manner to each other conceal deeper feelings? Strange, Millie thought, that now and then in one's life a hundred unconnected circumstances combine to give a certain hour a charm which makes it stand out a lovely memory for a life-time.

Perhaps it is the simultaneous absence of every kind of annoyance from some moment, in the heart of which is a small nucleus of enjoyment—a warm and harmonious room full of pleasant people, nicely-creamed Pekoe in the nick of time for over-strained nerves, unexpected rest. Whatever it may be, the ever-recurring memory of that afternoon, with a man's deep voice and laugh sounding through it, was to Millie like going out of the damp, choking fog into warmth and perfume of some beautiful and well-lighted home. Meanwhile the world remained grey and grim.

"Going without one's dinner *is* hard lines," George Burroughes grumbled half an hour later, helping himself to a noble portion of cold game-pie from the Sunday supper-table.

"Especially on the hardest working day of all,

when one most needs support," added his sympathetic cousin, cosily consuming her second cheese-cake. "How I wish you would have had another helping of beef, George. It's so delightfully supporting to see you making beef vanish. One is fed vicariously."

"As for people who live upon jam-tarts and whipped cream! Well! well! moral fibre is not to be expected of such persons, is it, mother?"

"I know nothing, my dear, but that I want a custard and some claret. I have no fibre left of any description, moral or immoral."

Silence ensued; the partridge-pie was entombed and succeeded by a goodly hunch of apple-tart, which in its turn went the way of all cookery. Then the following pregnant observation escaped the meditative rector: "Brown eyes are the best, so womanly, so expressive, always soft."

His cousin's were nearly black, comparable by her admirers to purple pansies.

"Millie Ray has brown eyes," she said, composedly, "nice, honest, brown eyes; doggy eyes, some people would call them."

"Well! Of all the unholy, the howlingly inappropriate comparisons!" growled George, roused from pleasing reflections. "I think *that* young lady's eyes need not be discussed. Really, my dear cousin, really! really!——"

## CHAPTER VI.

FEBRUARY was passing; birds were nesting; the pathetic gladness of mild sunny days shining on a bare, storm-drenched earth, like the gladness of mourners trying to take heart again after long grief, had come; nature was stirring in her sleep softly beneath the sunrays, as the dreaming Adonis stirred when the shadow of returning Venus fell on his thrilled breast.

"I loathe this languid, enervating air!" thought George Burroughes, snatching off his clerical felt hat and letting the moist west wind play through his stubborn curls and over his broad forehead, now lined with care; "Just one good rousing week of Charles Kingsley's wild north-easter to stir the viking's blood—or the donkey's—the fool's! the idiot's, who can't take charge of a bank-note without setting his whole parish by the ears! Why did I come to this beastly place? Why was I taken in by cant and hypocrisy? I? Good Lord!

I must be the biggest fool going. That beast Carabas may well sneer. He'll have the pull over me now, and no mistake."

"Caw! Caw! Caw!" came raucously on the quiet air; a string of solemn black rooks rose from a field of young corn, on which they had been gloriously but thievishly banqueting, and flapped themselves sedately homewards, their wings flashing as they moved.

"Oh! you solemn hypocrites! black-coated, parsonic thieves! with your maws crammed full of Farmer Luster's corn and your marauding beaks full of wise saws and self-complacent prate. Caw! you clerical blackguards, caw! It's the way of the black coats. Give me some honest Dick Turpin, some frank Bill Sykes, with his unmistakable hang-dog face and fine and candid oaths and thieves' patter, but heaven deliver me from the whole sneaking, preaching, pious, black-coated tribe. Oh! let's swear, let's drink, let's gamble, let's—heaven help me! for I'm a sinful man, and more than half a pagan!" He leant his elbows on a stile and buried his face in his hands while the garrulous brotherhood of rooks flapped and floated sedately above him, uttering their soothing, complacent caws, as they guilelessly congratulated themselves on the fine feeding they had that day achieved in the intervals of the annual spring cleaning and house decorating, incumbent on birds so respectable.

The last black splash had disappeared from the clear blue overhead, and the caws were dying away in the distance, when George lifted his head and frowned at the translucent green of young corn blades before him. "Heaven knows," he said to himself, "I've never been so hard hit before. It's the beastliest hole I ever was in in my life. But it has *got* to be done"

Then he turned and strode up the down in the slanting sunshine, his eyes bent downwards on the soft springy turf, his ears heedless of eddying larks and piping thrushes, until he reached another stile, set in a wind-shaven, lichen-gilded hedge, and again stopped in the shadow of a gnarled and twisted thorn. She would be there before long, he knew, and then, why then, the thing must be done. He pulled the felt hat down over his brows and listened with a beating heart and close-pressed lips for the light steps of the girl he expected, his heart throbbing more quickly and strongly every minute.

He felt that he could meet her more easily and calmly under the shelter of the crabbed old thorn than out on the open down.

A faint rustle that must be her approach made his brain throb with his heart and struck him speechless, scattering to the four winds the sentences he had so carefully rehearsed. But it was only the faint sibilation of wind in the dry bents and short grass, and the rattle of thorn-branches overhead.

—"Were it ever so airy a tread,  
My heart would hear her and 'beat,'  
Were it earth in an earthy bed"—

But *she* was no tall and stately maiden "in gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls," this was no scented rose-garden in a warm, waning summer night or daffodil dawn; at this gate was no passion-flower to let fall a "splendid tear," no listening larkspur or waiting lily, only a flowerless, leafless thorn, and damp earth-smelling turf.

*She* was in fact only Millie Ray, just released from Farmer Luster's dingy school-room, where she had been busy the livelong day, handling greasy slates and much-thumbed and evil-smelling grammar and history books, and patiently pressing the three celebrated r's upon several stolid and reluctant young brains, with one break for a dinner, of which mental arithmetic formed the principal and, to her, strikingly unpalatable and indigestible dish. Millie came over the down in the pleasant soft sunbeams with a dancing step, glad to be free of the schoolroom, and glad for many other things. So many cares had been lightened since the eventful day of the curate's answered prayer; Walter was growing stronger, his father had some mystic hoard of unknown wealth, which procured many hitherto undreamed-of comforts and luxuries for the lad—even country drives, in which the whole family had joyously, and with much benefit, shared. Her father was happy and hopeful, her mother cheerful, an indescribable aroma of hope and gladness pervaded the pinched and narrow little home, which in these days was not without a tinge of romance. There were other elements of happiness—elements of which Millie was but vaguely conscious, and which imparted a roseate hue to greyest facts, and gave a zest to everything, revealing a thousand unsuspected beauties and delights in the commonest things of daily life. "Heaven lies about us," truly, but not "in our infancy," and the glory-clouds "are trailed"

indeed, but not in childhood ; rather when manhood and womanhood begin to bud and blossom with the glow of early maturity ; then, as Schiller says :—

“Das Auge sieht den Himmel offen,  
Es schwelgt das Herz in Seligkeit.”

So Millie Ray stepped lightly over the short down turf in the slant sunbeams, happy with the deep, unconscious happiness that comes but once in life, and, when it once knows the reason why, melts away, because it “looks before and after, and sighs for what is not.”

George saw her now, and some old English poetry floated through his brain :—

“I sawgh hir daunce so comelely,  
Carol and synge so swetely,  
Laughe and pleye so womanly,  
And loke so debonairly”—

and his heart was ready to break.

Millie was not attired like the Duchess Blanche ; her hair was not like “fine golden wyres,” though it gleamed in the ruddying sunbeams. She caught sight of the stalwart figure beneath the twisted thorn, and her heart gave a great bound, the blood flew madly over her face, the song she was singing in pure unthinking gladness broke off abruptly ; she stooped to pick a flower—it was Chaucer’s own loved “daisy, or els the deye’s eye”—and tried to order and calm the quick, wild, happy throbbing in her breast.

For why do young men wait for young maidens beneath thorn trees in pleasant spring days ? We all know, but we don’t reason about it. We don’t ask why the tiny common flower, so prized of poets, so deeply loved and seldom gathered, classed as a weed, trodden daily by the “dull clown’s clouted shoon,” springs unbidden on every soil, is the first darling of our infancy, embroiders the unblossomed green of quiet and nameless graves, and is dearer to man on the whole than any mortal flower.

Therefore, Millie Ray did not think or reason why her heart throbbed with unspeakable joy ; she picked the crimson-edged scentless flower, and walked with a more sedate step towards the fateful thorn, her eyes bent upon the tiny white disk in her hand, as if it were some newly-discovered marvel of the flower world, and grew happier with every step she took.

George left his posture of utter dejection with a

suppressed groan, pushed his hat to its usual level and looked at the slim young figure with the down-drooped eyes advancing in sunlight, her shadow stretching far behind her. She wore the same garments as when he called her dowdy, but she wore them with a difference ; it must be confessed that she had of late taken to study that confidante, torment, and counsellor of young womanhood, the harmless and necessary looking-glass, and to compare its just reflections with living facts that met her eyes in the streets ; she had acquired the art of sticking a pin here and a stitch there—just there and nowhere else—that makes all the difference between dressing and merely wearing clothes. There was something new in her bearing, a fresh grace in her young undeveloped figure. There was a light in her face, happy curves that took off its thinness ; to-day there was even a delicate wild-rose flush. Then the day being fine, the Sunday hat, gradually declining to work-a-day uses with the waning winter, had been donned. Now, when one has only two hats, and the work-a-day one has been wet through half-a-dozen times at least, besides having been blown, and snowed, sleeted, hailed, and misted upon all the winter long, a Sunday hat is a pleasant thing to wear, especially when one happens to fancy oneself in it, still more especially when one happens to meet people one does not exactly dislike in it. Sunday hats are various ; there is indeed nothing distinctive about Sunday hats as a class, nothing to differentiate them, for instance, from the everyday species ; of this specimen it may briefly be observed that its chief distinction lay in its having nothing remarkable about it, that it fitted well and had been placed with care and counsel from a mirror upon thick, bright brown hair, and that it consisted partly of brown velvet, which harmonized with and increased the velvety softness of innocent brown eyes beneath it. It may be added that the proper effect to be produced upon the beholder by the ideal female hat is purely negative ; it should inspire neither admiration nor the reverse, but simply and unobtrusively call attention to the best aspect of the wearer’s face. Such was the effect produced by the subject of this digression upon George Burroughes.

“Poor child !” he said to himself : “poor dear child !”

“Oh ! how do you do, Mr. Burroughes,” said

Millie, with a surprised air, when she raised the brown eyes from the daisy and appeared to catch sight of George's troubled face for the first time, within a couple of feet of the stile. Then, to his surprise, George found himself stammering, and at a loss to account for his presence there, a fact which inspired shy Millie with superb calm.

"I—I thought you'd come this way," he blurted out, taking the inevitable parcel from her hands, and helping her to spring over the stile by the other, which held the daisy, to the detriment of the poor little flower.

"Well! you see I usually come this way, because there isn't another," she commented with engaging candour, "except the high road; but that's a good mile longer round."

"To be sure," he said, absently. Then they stepped quickly and lightly over the turf, as if they were bound for the brilliant sunset of purple and gold and amethyst cloud-bars on a lucid green sky, shining before them like gates of Paradise unfolding to admit them to its unspeakable charm.

Millie's heart throbbed on, her eyes softened with excess of light; both faces were luminous with the glory of the changing sky; George said to himself, "How can I begin? How *can* it be said?" Millie wondered if it were quite right to be so happy out of heaven. The sun's upper rim dipped in the shining sea; and the lower cloud-bars were ridged with fire.

"A very fine sky," he said, absently, "and not a bad look-out over the woods to the sea. You see it rather too often, don't you?"

"Oh! I could look for ever," she said, with one of her old furious blushes. "By the way, has Honybun confessed yet?" she added, ashamed of this enthusiasm.

"Honybun is not guilty, Miss Ray," he replied solemnly, in deepest bass.

"Oh! but how do you know?" she asked in quick surprise; "how *can* you know?"

"It is proved—proved to the very hilt. We have—I have—been unjust to Honybun."

"Poor Honybun! But, after all, it serves him right for having a bad character. How sorry my father will be!"

"For Honybun's proven innocence!"

Millie's child laugh rippled out; "Oh, isn't it likely?" she said. "He will be sorry to have misjudged him, though."

"I trust that he may be," replied George, in a tone so grave that she turned a little and looked straight in his face with a gaze of utter surprise.

He did not return her gaze; he was looking down, grave, preoccupied. The light of the western sky, wherein fire-edged islets of many colours and shapes were floating on a clear green sea, was reflected on his face. "I trust he may be, Miss Ray," he repeated with increasing gravity.

"*May* be! Of course he will be," she returned sharply. "Mr. Burroughes, what are you thinking of? For what do you take my father?"

"Dear Miss Ray," he replied more gently, but, if possible, more gravely, "I have taken your father for a saint. I have revered him as I have revered no other living man."

"And so you ought," she replied; "he *is* a saint. No other living man deserves so much reverence as he."

As Millie spoke the brilliance died from the sky; the islets turned grey on a luminous sea of pale primrose. The two young people turned, following the winding road, and faced a grey world, arched by a pale blue sky, marbled with grey cloud.

Millie's heart sank. She knew not why the beauty and glamour seemed all at once to have died out of her life, leaving it blank and chill as it was before—before? Perhaps before the Sunday tea drinking at the Rectory. Nay; blanker and chillier for the lost glory.

"I think I should have been a beast if I had not," he replied, in the meantime, always with that unaccustomed gravity that woke a dark, dim fear in her heart.

"I spoke hotly," she faltered. "Perhaps I was rude."

"No, oh no! Perhaps I was rough."

"And I have been wanting to tell you how grateful I was for your good advice."

"Which?" he asked, in the old genial way. "I've given you tons of it; but your blood is on your own head, remember. Still, good advice is about the most indigestible stuff going."

"About the photography situation," she replied. "Of course I see, now that you have put it before me, that it would never have done for my father to have me in a photographer's shop *here*. Good for me, no doubt, I should have learnt the *hart*, as Blake said, thoroughly in his studio, and might have set up for myself later. Then you would

have let me take you in shovel hat and gaiters, wouldn't you?"

"Say in a mitre and crosier, while you're about it."

"Yes; in crosier and lawn sleeves! Oh! Mr. Burroughes!" Millie laughed at the vision of George thus attired. "But what *do* you think?" she added, rapturously.

"Oh! a lot—an awful lot—of things I'd a precious deal rather not."

"It's almost settled," she replied; "indeed, it's as good as arranged that I'm to teach the little Morrison-Munns."

"But that will be a long walk for you every day, Miss Ray; three good miles."

"But Little Buckley is two-and-a-half, and—well! it's pleasanter to be with gentlefolk; and summer is coming, no wet, or wind, or mud to speak of."

"You are very plucky," he said, slightly turning, and seeing the eager flushed face through moist eyes, "and I—ah—wish you—every success. Lady Morrison-Munn is very nice. But Sir Munn—well! I mean, *she's*—you'll be sure to like *her*. Anything I can do? Do you know what I should *like* to do?" he added, with a sudden change of face, and the low tones Millie had only heard addressed to herself.

"Something kind, no doubt," she replied. "You are always kind."

"I should like—oh! I should like—" he broke off with a faint gasp, and walked on in silence in the amethystine dusk, which was closing around them with a growing briskness in the air that presaged frost.

They were about to turn a corner of the dim, elm-shadowed high-road, when a landau and pair dashed sharply round, so sharply that Millie's skirts were touched, and almost dragged by the

wheels, and George, who had scarcely time to drop behind her and give her a gentle push towards the hedge, sang out fiercely to the coachman, who merely grinned and flicked his horses.

"Blackguard!" cried George, savagely, on returning to her. "The day will come when I knock that fellow clean off his box. Beastly cads to let their people drive like that!"

"We must write to *The Times*," Millie said. "A mercy it wasn't my Sunday gown."

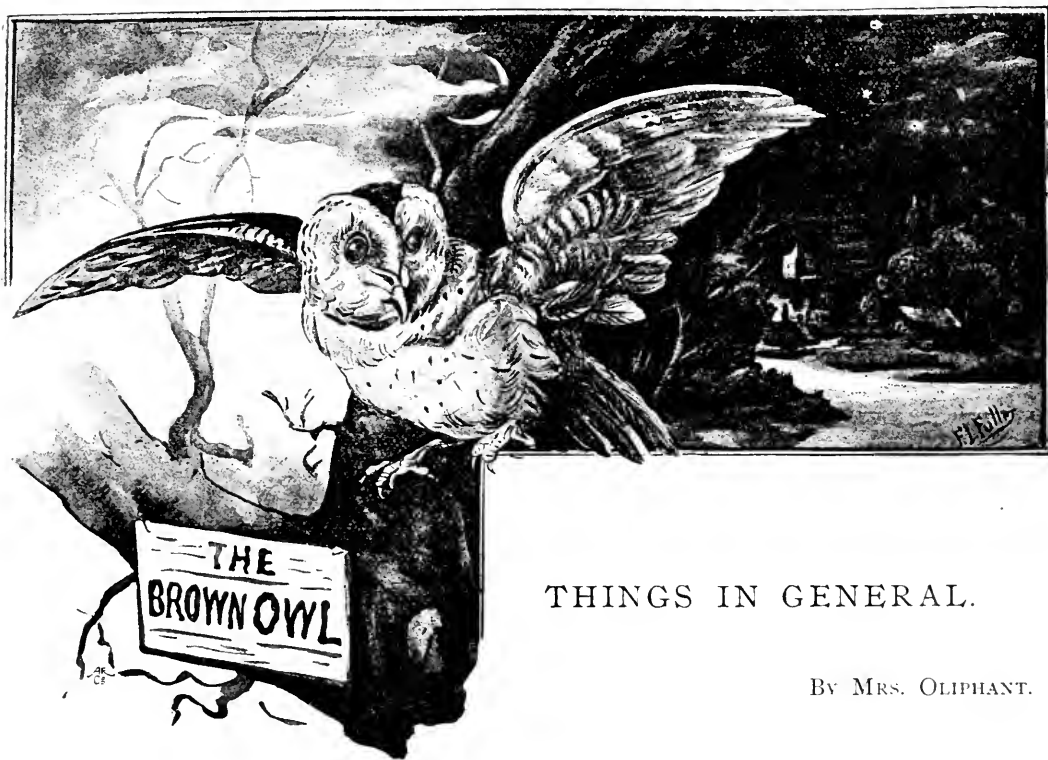
Thus the conversation was turned, and the dangerously over-charged atmosphere cleared. Silence followed Millie's pregnant observation, but though the air bit sharper and sharper with the deepening dusk, George walked more and more slowly, and they had nearly reached the row of cheap little houses away from the sea, in one of which the curate dwelt, before he, with hesitation and embarrassment, delivered into Millie's careful keeping a letter "of great importance," which she was straitly charged to deliver privately into her father's own hands, and to beg him to "read at once," and in strict solitude. She took it lightly, as a thing that did not concern her, and tucked it into her jacket pocket, with a happy blush hidden by the shadows, and then ensued another silence, throbbing with uncomprehended agitation, and broken at last by George, whose steps lagged more and more, until he stopped as if to say good-bye.

"You won't forget," he said slowly, "you *will* let me help you, won't you? Let me—" he paused and looked at the ground. "This letter," he continued, "may part us. But, in any case, trust me, and let me be your friend."

"Oh! Mr. Burroughes, *let* you!"

"Millie!" he cried, "Millie!" And then, without any farewell, he turned and vanished in the shadows.

(*To be continued.*)



## THINGS IN GENERAL.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

THERE is a little less, I think, this year than usual of the Christmas literature, which has been so prolific and made so large a show since the time when Dickens gave us a great deal of nonsense on the subject along with the little touch of genius which made the first of his Christmas tales palatable. I wonder what the world would say to Scrooge's performances now? Have we outgrown those amazing transformation scenes, resulting in so many turkeys and plum puddings, such blue gleams of burnt brandy and sugar of innumerable cakes, which made the old curmudgeon into a convivial dotard, touching everybody's glass, and raising everybody's salary? It is curious to think how great an effect that impulse had in its time—if not by way of transforming other curmudgeons, at least of producing a deluge of imitations, now, I hope, running dry. Did we all keep Christmas less well before, and better after, Scrooge? or had that veracious history anything really to do with the Christmas entertainments, Christmas bounties and indulgences, which have been such a nuisance to the greater part of the world since? It

was her Majesty, I believe, and not Mr. Dickens, who introduced the Christmas tree, and with it an amount of ill-directed industry, gradually growing into a very climax and triumph of Trumpery, from which we have not yet escaped. How they manage in Germany it is given but to those who have closely studied the manners and customs of that family of nations to tell. They give substantial gifts, things desired of the recipients, substantial articles that would have had to be purchased anyhow, if they had not been found on the tables round the Christmas tree, I am led to believe. But still the choice of them must be a strain of feeling, and great waste of nervous and muscular tissue, to use the wise language of to-day. The often hideous compounds of leather and pasteboard, of gum and gilding, of things unnecessary, unlovely, and undesirable, which are provided for the Christmas market in England, are a very deplorable feature in the business. Why should we make the lives of our friends miserable by those appalling note-books, those hideous calendars, those monstrous uglinesses, which are invented in greater numbers every year?



I have often thought that if persons who have got into the vicious round of Christmas present-giving would compound, by the payment of a small sum all round for the poor, it would be an excellent, sensible reform, and save us all a great deal of trouble. We should not have the worry of choosing, or the annoyance of receiving, and making guilty speeches in return for articles of which we say to ourselves, "Heavens! what shall we do with it?" as soon as the donor's back is turned. So wise an expedient would destroy or greatly limit at least the production of trumpery, which in itself is a thing greatly to be desired. And suppose that for our money we got even a single ton of coal at the present famine prices, what a thing those twenty hundredweights—twenty good fires in as many miserable rooms, to which the absence of the fire gives the last touch of squalor and wretchedness—would be! I remember, at a moment of dreadful trouble and distress in a great northern town, where half the population was starving, the progress of a young man, a dear brother of my own, along one of the hungering, dreary streets, with a heavy cart full of coals lumbering after him. Angels have nothing to do with coals in a general way, so far as we are aware, but I think that youth, with his laughing eyes and friendly looks, and the dear, dirty, life-dispensing sacks that were carried after him, was as welcome as any angelic visitation to the anxious women at the doors, wondering if perhaps he was coming to them that day. What is there in all the bazaars so good as that? At the same time it is not necessary to ruin the bazaars. So long as there are children in the land Christmas presents will flourish.

But indeed the dreadful requirements of Christmas trees keep the trumpery always in request. Great and small—and small quite as much as great—the children are getting entirely demoralised by this system. To see them looking at their presents is a moral lesson of the most serious import. The little things of five and six have learnt to turn up their small noses at their too abundant gifts—they criticise, they compare, they give their little opinions with a freedom which makes their entertainers nervous, which makes us ashamed of the trifles which once we should have thought extravagant. "Oh, only that! it was not worth while coming for that," the eyes,

and sometimes the lips, of these little persons, say. So I have heard a national school expressing itself, not to say the motley company of an evening class. The children of the slums have discovered what trumpery means as well as our own curled darlings. They are ready to throw back in our faces, after their twentieth Christmas "treat," the things which we have gathered (cheap) from all the bazaars for them. To whip the little wretches all round is what one feels disposed to do, but when that amiable impulse is found impossible, we cringe and pander, and try to make up by something better, proud to elicit a momentary gleam of satisfaction. Forty shillings (that is the appalling price coals are at now, I think) does not go very far in buying trumpery for a Christmas tree; there would be more satisfaction in twenty hundredweights of coal.

The mania for Christmas cards has also, it is pleasant to think, diminished a little. They do not thrust themselves under our notice with the persistency of a few years ago, and there is a kind of—if not art, yet of art industry employed on them, which is not so injurious to the moral character as the calendars and pocket books. But they are even more troublesome afterwards. What is to be done with all the gay and pretty coloured things that garland our mantel-pieces for a day, and bring us the good wishes of people who are often quite indifferent to us, in the shape of *banal* rhymes and prints of flowers impossible at Christmas or any other season? Put them in the fire, we say; but there are numbers of gentle hearts which cannot find the courage to execute that holocaust, and economical minds full of forethought, who think of other Christmases to come, and lay them by for further use; and there are albums, alas! filled with those unmanageable squares of pasteboard, with their stiff, thick edges, and plastery sheen, and vulgar sentiment. We hear a great deal about Art in these days, but it is to be feared that art will never come low enough, or spread widely enough to eradicate the longing of the ordinary soul after prettinesses of this sad kind. We should say, we fear, the feminine soul, for few men (to do these so often objectionable persons justice) are attracted by decorative articles of this kind. They like, we may presume, the little impudent French figures on their match boxes, but not the snowy landscapes encircled by

holly, or the groups of flowers, or cats, or the robin redbreast on his bough, which celebrate Christmas. These, the reader will think, perhaps a little scornfully, are all very old-fashioned and simple, in comparison with the glories that now exist; but I confess that I like a copy, on paste-board, of the Sistine Madonna, printed in colours, least of all.

Is it a thing we are obliged to confess, that women like trumpery, as a general principle, better than men?—or, at least, are more tolerant of it? At all events, they like the giving and receiving of presents better than men do, and they have often less money to spend: and, therefore, to indulge this amiable weakness at all, must have cheap presents:—from which two feeblenesses combined springs the manufacture of things with a false show of convenience and a still more false show of beauty, to make Christmas and other anniversaries hideous. This difference, however, between the sexes is a purely conventional difference, arising from circumstances, and not one of those fundamental distinctions on which people are so fond of dwelling now-a-days. Heaven forbid that I should attempt to enter upon that interminable subject. I am bound to confess that whenever I see the word Woman writ large, with a big capital letter, I consider discretion the better part of valour, and flee. And I advise the youthful reader to do the same. In most of the discussions on the subject, women, who are only half and a trifle more of the human race, are treated both by friends and foes as if they were a small and imperfectly comprehended sect, whose peculiarities were so odd, and their habits of thinking so strange that the other part of the world, *i.e.*, their fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons, could never fully understand them, nor make out what they wanted. In the same way our French friends discuss *les Anglais*, as if the great British nation, with its many diversities, was formed after one pattern, cut out according to a certain image, every man with the same angles. I am not fond of classifications. The wonder of human nature is that there are no two persons who exactly resemble each other, notwithstanding all the facts and fictions of heredity and other philosophical fads of the day. There are no two sets of finger points, I am told, which are the same, and this is a new doctrine easily accepted by the wise: but when

we say there are no two souls the same, the philosopher pauses. Such things as the spirits of men (or perhaps the word is old-fashioned), the characters, the dispositions of men, he would like to pack in barrels like herrings as things much more commonplace than the finger points. To separate women from the race of which they form so large a part, is, to my mind, one of the strangest pieces of folly. A girl is often, in her mind and disposition, more like her father than her mother, and it is a commonplace (futile too) to say that men of genius, for example, derive their nobler part from the mother's side. In all such things we are mingled beyond any possibility of severance—and yet always individual to the confusion of any, however plausible, classification. How is a woman who can recall her father in herself, who can see features of herself in her son, to separate herself from her race, as if she belonged to a tribe apart? I think that girls should think twice before they adopt this limited view. It has nothing to do with inferiority or superiority of faculty. To all of us there are the two sides of the house which unite in our personal being. Often in a family there is a daughter who is the cleverest, the quickest to learn, the most understanding; and often there is a son who is the best tempered, the gentlest and kindest. There is no rule in this point: and as for following that wildly gyrating standard of Woman, in the midst of the host which enrolls itself as a Sect against a world of men, I would not have the young woman think it a noble thing. Let us be women individually to the best of our abilities, not a regiment, or a strange tribe, or an inferior section, but simply half (or more) of the world.

There is nothing more amusing and more curious than the attitude of men and women towards each other universally. They are, of necessity, destined to be each other's closest and most inseparable companions, and at one time of life, almost universally, and I hope in many cases all through life, a man loves a woman and a woman loves a man, more than any other created being. Yet the mutual contempt they have of each other is the most amusing and the most universal of sentiments. The men who have possessed much longer the power and freedom of expressing it, have done so at the cost (to us) of a general and almost ineffaceable prejudice; but since women have had

the freedom of expression (only recent to any large degree in the history of the world, though never wholly suppressed) they have done their best, we must allow, to pay back their debt. It is whimsical, but true, that if men and women were not each other's natural partners, they would be each other's natural enemies—and often, still more curiously, they are both. Nothing, for instance, can be more brutal and savage than the remarks which are sometimes made by men—even of the higher sort—upon women who have grown old and unlovely, and who presumably have never been able to attract any man to them—which are words I have heard used as the height of opprobrium and scorn, by an excellent man. “But then you ought to be deeply sorry for them, and to do anything you could in the way of the suffrage, or whatever else might please the poor souls, to make up to them for the loss of that inestimable advantage,” I replied—and the man was angry, divining my scorn of his scorn, and not able to defend it. We give about as much as we take on both sides. There is an egregious Italian professor

(let not any one suppose that there is mockery in this adjective, for should not he be addressed in choice Italian, as “il egregio Professore Lombroso?”) who has been proving lately that women are callous by nature, and that their supposed and traditional patience springs solely from the fact that they are incapable of acute suffering, as well as of feeling anything in a supreme degree. This is a very new view; but we must all allow that it is not at all new, that indeed it is universal for women to derive much, if secret amusement from the outcries of their man when his little finger aches, and he thinks he is going to die. At this, from time immemorial, from grandmother to granddaughter, we have laughed, often in our sleeves, but with frequent communication to each other of a jest universally understood. Why, then, should we object now to *il egregio professore*? He has at last found another side to the question, which we have had the enjoyment of so long, from ours.

But we must talk further on another occasion of these things.



## ATALANTA SCHOLARSHIP AND READING UNION.

As Christmas is not the time for serious study, I have set the following subject in which all members may join without much mental exertion—

A condensed novel, not exceeding 500 words, introducing the conventional characters of melodrama and the penny novelette, viz:—an impecunious and dissipated peer; his lovely daughter; a dark, wealthy, foreign villian; a fair, handsome landscape painter, beloved by the heroine; the inevitable trials of innocence and temporary triumph of vice; a climax of poetical justice.

This is intended as an essay in the art of suggestion. The honours will be awarded for originality of plot and treatment; brevity combined with elegance of style. No space need be taken up with dialogue.

## SEARCH QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

### I.

Of whom and by whom were the following lines written?—

1. His highest honours to the heart belong :  
His virtues form'd the magic of his song.
2. In language warm as could be breathed or penn'd  
Thy picture speaks the original, my friend,  
Not by those looks that indicate the mind—  
They only speak thee friend of all mankind ;  
Expression here more soothing still I see,  
That friend of all a partial friend to me.

### II.

1. From what poem are these lines quoted?—  
Her eye's dark charm 'twere vain to tell,  
But gaze on that of the Gazelle,  
It will assist thy fancy well ;  
As large, as languishingly dark,  
But soul beamed forth in every spark  
That darted from beneath the lid,  
Bright as the jewel of Giamschid.

2. Explain allusion in last line.

### III.

1. What songster is referred to thus?—  
Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird !  
No hungry generations tread thee down :
2. Give author's name and poem.

### IV.

Quote the lines wherein a poet compares a maiden's visions of her lover to the work of a painter who depicts the best and fullest traits in the face of his subject.

### V.

1. What author has immortalized the object of his affections under the name of Saccharissa ?
2. Give the real title of the original.

### VI.

1. Give source of the following quotation :—

I wat youe byn great lordes twaw,  
I am a poor squyar of lande ;  
I wyll never se my captayne fyght on a fylde,  
And stande my-selffe, and look on,  
But whyll I may my weppone welde,  
I wyll not fayl both harte and hande.

2. Give name of speaker.

### VII.

What character uses these words and to what poem do they belong?—

“ ——— My soul stands  
Now past the midway from mortality,  
And so I can prepare without a sigh  
To tell thee briefly all my joy and pain.”

## ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (NOVEMBER).

### I.

1. *The Light of the Harem* (Lalla Rookh).
2. “The waters of Cachemir are the more renowned from its being supposed that the Cachemirians are indebted for their beauty to them.”—*Ali Yezdi*.

### II.

“ . . . Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys ” (Lorna Doone).

### III.

*Love's Labour Lost*. Maria and Rosaline.

### IV.

Crabbe (*English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*).

### V.

1. Hatton. 2. *A Long Story*, by Gray.

### VI.

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey.

### VII.

Tennyson to Dante.

### VIII.

Crabbe's *Convert*.





THE RUINED SANCTUARY.

S. E. Waller.

(By permission of the Berlin Photographic Co.)



BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

PART I.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE day was one of those Highland days which are a dream of freshness and beauty and delight. I do not claim that they are very frequent, but sometimes they will occur in a cluster, two or three together, like a special benediction out of heaven. The sun has a purity, a clearness, an ecstasy of light, which it has nowhere else. It looks, as it were, with a heavenly compunction, upon earth and sky, as if to make up for the many days when it is absent, expanding over mountain and moor with a smiling which seems personal and full of intention. The air is life itself, uncontaminated with any evil emanation, full of the warmth of the sun, and the odour of the fir trees and heather, and the murmur of all the living things about. The damp and dew which linger in the shady places disappear as if by magic. No unkindly creature, no venomous thing is abroad: no noise, no jar of living, though everything lives and grows and makes progress with such silent and smiling vigour. The two lovers in the midst of this incense-breathing nature—so still, yet so strong, so peaceful, yet so vigorous—felt that the scene was made for them,

that no surroundings could have been more fitly prepared and tempered for the group which was as the group in Eden, before trouble came. They wandered about together through the glen, and by the side of the shining brown trout stream, which glowed and smiled among the rocks, reflecting every ray and every cloud as it hurried and sparkled along, always in haste yet always at leisure. They lingered here and there, in a spot which was still more beautiful than all the others, though not so beautiful as the next which tempted them a little further on. Sometimes Ronald's rod was taken out and screwed together; sometimes even flung over a dark pool, where there were driftings and leapings of trout—but pulled in again before, as Lily said, any harm was done. "For why should any peaceful creature get a sharp hook in its jaw because you and me are happy?" she said: "that's no reason." Ronald, but for the pride of having something to carry back in his basket, was much of her opinion. He was not a devoted fisherman. Their happiness was no reason, clearly, for interfering with that of the meanest thing that lived. And they talked about everything in heaven and earth, not only of their own affairs, though, they were interesting enough.

Lily—who for a month had spoken to nobody except Beenie, save for that one visit to the Manse—had such an accumulation of remark and observation to get through on her side, and so much to demand from him, that the moments, and, indeed, the hours, flew. It is astonishing, even without the impulse of a long parting and sudden meeting, what wells of conversation flow forth between two young persons in their circumstances. Perhaps it would not sound very wise or witty if any cool spectator listened, but it is always delightful to the people concerned, and Lily was not the first comer, so to speak. She was full of variety, full of whim and fancy, no heaviness or monotony in her. Perhaps this matters less at such a moment of life than at any other. The dulllest pair find the art of entertaining each other, of keeping up their mutual interest. And now that the cold chill of doubt in respect to Ronald was removed from her mind, Lily flowed like the trout stream—as dauntless and as gay, reflecting every gleam of light.

"The worst thing is," Ronald said, "that the vacation will come to an end—not now or soon, Heaven be praised—but the time will come when I shall have to go back and pace the Parliament House, as of old, and my Lily will be left alone in the wilderness."

"Not alone, as I was before," said Lily, "never that any more: for now I have something to remember, and something to look forward to. You've been here, Ronald: nothing can take that from us. I will come and sit on this stone, and say to myself, 'Here we spent the day; and here we had our picnic: and this was what he said.' And I will laugh at all your jokes over again."

"Ah!" he said, "it's but a grim entertainment that. I went and stood behind those curtains in that window, do you remember, in George Square? and said to myself, 'Here my Lily was: and here she said——.' But, instead of laughing, I was much more near crying. You will not find much good in that."

"You crying!" she said, with the water in her eyes, and a little soft reproving blow of her fingers upon his cheek. "I do not believe it. But I daresay I shall cry and then laugh. What does it matter which? They are just the same—for a girl. And then I shall say to myself, 'At the

New Year he is coming back again, and then——'"

"What shall we do at the New Year?" he said. "No days like this then. How can I take my Lily out on the moor among the snow?"

"If I am a Lily, I am one that can bloom anywhere: in the snow as well as the sun."

"And so you are, my dearest, making a sunshine in a shady place. But still we must think of that. Winter and summer are two different things. Cannot we find a friend to take us in?"

"I will tell you where we shall find a friend. You'll come to the Tower with your boldest face, as if it was the first time you had been near. And you will ask: 'Does Miss Ramsay live here?' And Katrin will say, 'Deed does she, sir. Here and no other place.' And you will smite your thigh in your surprise, and say, 'I thought, I had heard that! I am a friend from Edinburgh, and I just stopped on the road to (here say any name you please), to say "Good-day" to the young lady, if she was here.' And then you will look about, and you will say, 'It is rather a lonesome place.'"

"Go on," said Ronald, laughing, "I like the dialogue: though whether we should trust your keepers so far as that——"

"My keepers! They are my best of friends! Well, Katrin will look round too, and she will say, as if considering the subject for the first time, 'In winter it is, maybe, a wee lonesome—for a young leddy. Ye'll maybe, be a friend of Sir Robert's, too?' And you will say, 'Oh, yes, I am a great friend of Sir Robert's.' And she will open the door wide and say, 'Come ben, sir, come ben. It will be a great divert to our young leddy to see a visitor. And you're kindly welcome,' that's what she will say."

"Will she say all that, and shall I say all that? Perhaps I shall, including that specious phrase about being a friend of Sir Robert's—which would surprise Sir Robert very much."

"Well, you know him, surely, and you are not unfriends. It strikes me that, to be a lawyer, Ronald, you are full of scruples."

"What a testimonial to my virtue!" he said, with a laugh. "But it is not scruples, it is pure cowardice, Lily. Are they to be trusted? If Sir Robert were to be written to, and I to be forbidden the door, and my Lily carried off to a worse wilderness—abroad—as he threatened!"



"I will tell you one thing : I will not go !" said Lily, "not if Sir Robert were ten times my uncle. But you need not fear for Katrin. She likes me better than Sir Robert. You may think that singular, but so it is. And I am much more fun," cried Lily, "far more interesting ! I include you, and you and me together—we are a story, we are a romance ! And Katrin will like us better than one of the Waverley novels, and she will be true to us to the last drop of her blood."

"These Highlanders, you never can be sure of them," said Ronald, shaking his head. He spoke the sentiment of his time and district, which was too near the Highland line to put much confidence in the Celt.

"But she is not a Highlander. She is Aberdeen," cried Lily. "Beenie is a Highlander, if you call Kinloch-Rugas Highland, and she is as true as steel. Oh, you are a person of prejudices, Ronald : but I trust all the world," she cried, lifting her fine and shining face to the shining sky.

"And so do I," he cried, "to-day." And they paused amid all considerations of the past and future, to remember the glory of the present hour, and how sweet it was above everything, that it should be to-day.

Thus the afternoon fled. They made their little table in the sunshine, for shade is not as desirable in a Highland glen as in a Southern valley, and ate their luncheon merrily together, Lily recounting, with a little shame, how it had been intended for Helen Blythe instead of Ronald Lumsden. "I was very near telling a fib," she said, compunctiously, "but I did not do it. I left it to Katrin's imagination."

"Helen Blythe must have a robust appetite if all this was for her," he said. "Is this an effort of imagination, too ? But come, Lily, we must do our duty by the view. There is the old Brig to climb, and all the fairy glen to see."

"I promised not to climb the old Brig," she said. "But that promise, I suppose, was only to hold in case it was Helen Blythe that was with me, for she could give little help if I slipped, whereas you ——"

"I ? I hope I can take care of my Lily," said the young man ; and after they had packed their basket, and put it ready to be tied once more to Rory's saddle, who was picnicking, too, on the

grass, in one continuous and delicate meal, they wandered off together, to make the necessary pilgrimage, though the old Brig and the fairy glen attracted but little of the attention of the pair, so fully engrossed in each other. They climbed the broken arch, however, which was half embedded in the slope of the bank, and overgrown with every kind of green and flourishing thing, arm in arm, Ronald swinging his companion lightly over the dangerous bits, for love—while Lily, for love, consented to be aided, though little needing the aid. And how it happened will never be known, but their happy progress came to a sudden pause on an innocent bit of turf, where no peril was. If it were Ronald who stepped false, or Lily, neither of them could tell, but in a moment calamity came. He disengaged himself from her, almost roughly, pushing her away, and thus, instead of dragging her with him, crashed down alone through the briars and bushes, with a noise which, to Lily, filled the air like thunder. When she had slipped and stumbled in her fright and anxiety after him, she found him lying, trying to laugh, but with his face contorted with pain, among the nettles and weeds at the bottom. "What has happened ! What has happened !" she cried.

"What an ass I am," said he, "and what a nuisance for you, Lily. I believe I have sprained my ankle—of all the silly things to do ! and at this time, of all others, betraying you !"

Lily, I need not say, was for a moment at her wit's end. There were no ambulance classes in those days, nor attempts to train young ladies in the means of first help. But there is always the light of nature, a thing much to be trusted to, all the same. Lily took his handkerchief, because it was the largest, and bound up his foot, as far as that was possible, cutting open the boot with his knife : and then they held a brief council of war. Ronald wished to be left there while she went for help, but there was no likelihood of obtaining help nearer than Kinloch-Rugas, and finally it was decided that, in some way or other, he should struggle on to Rory's back, and so be led to the Manse, where a welcome and aid were sure to be found. It was a terrible business getting this accomplished, but with patience, and a good deal of pain, it was done at last—the injured foot supported *tant bien que mal* in the stirrup, and a woeful little group set forth on the way to the

village. But I do wrong to say it was a woeful group, for, though the pain made Ronald faint, and though Lily's heart was full of anguish and anxiety, they both exerted themselves to the utmost, each for the sake of the other. Lily led the reluctant pony along, sometimes running by his side, sometimes dragging him with both her hands, too much occupied for thought. What would people think did not occur to her yet. People might think what they liked so long as she got him safe to the Manse. She knew that they would be kind to him there. But what an end it was to the loveliest of days: and the sun was beginning to get low, and the road so long.

"Oh Rory, man!" cried poor Lily, apostrophising the pony, after the manner of Dougal. "If you would only go steady and go soft to-day! To-morrow you may throw me if you like, and I will never mind; but oh, go canny, if there is any heart in you, to-day!" I think that Rory felt the appeal by some magnetism in her touch if not by her words, on which point I cannot say anything positively: but he did at least overcome his flightiness, and accomplished the last half of the road at a steady trot, which gave Ronald exquisite pain, and kept Lily running, but shortened considerably the period of their suffering. They were received with a great outcry of sympathy and compassion at the Manse, where Ronald was laid out at once on the big haircloth sofa, and his foot relieved as much as Helen's skill, which was not inconsiderable, could do. It was he who made the necessary explanations, Lily, in her trouble, having quite forgot the necessity for them.

"I was so happy," he said, "so fortunate as to be seen by Miss Ramsay, who knew me—the only creature hereabouts who does: and you see what she has done for me: helped me to struggle up, put me on her pony, and brought me here: a perfect good Samaritan."

"Oh don't, don't speak like that!" said Lily, in her distress. She felt she could not at this moment bear the lie. Nobody had ever seen Lily Ramsay so dishevelled before: her hair shaken out by her run, her skirt torn where she had caught her foot in it, in her struggles to help Ronald, and covered with the dust of the road.

"She would just be that," said Helen Blythe, receiving the narrative with faith undoubting, "and what a good thing it was you, my dear

that knew the gentleman, and not a strange person! And what a grand thing that you were riding upon Rory! Just lie as quiet as you can, the hot bathing will relieve the pain, and now the boot's off ye'll be easier: and the doctor will come in to see you as soon as he comes home. Don't ye make a movement, sir, that ye can help. Just lie quiet—lie quiet! that is the chief remedy of all."

"He is Mr. Lumsden, Helen," said Lily, composed, "a friend of my uncle's, from Edinburgh. Oh, I am glad he is in your hands. He had slipped down the broken arch at the old Brig, where all the tourists go: and I had ridden there to-day, just to see it."

"Eh, my dear, how thankful you must be," was all Helen's reply; but it seemed to Lily that the old minister in his big chair by the fireside gave her a glance which was not so all-believing as Helen's.

"It was just an extraordinary piece of good luck for the young man," the minister said. "Things seldom happen so pat in real life. But a young lady like you, Miss Lily, likes the part of the good Samaritan."

She could not look him full in the face, and the laugh with which he ended his speech seemed the most cruel of mocking sounds to poor Lily. She put up her hands to her tumbled hair.

"May I go to your room and make myself tidy?" she said. "I had to run most of the way with Rory, and my skirt so long for riding. I don't know what sort of dreadful person they must have thought me in the town."

"Nobody but will think all the better of you for your kindness," said Helen, "and we'll soon mend your skirt, for there's really little harm done. And I think you should have the gig from the inn to drive you back, my dear, for your nerves are shaken, and the afternoon's getting late, and you must not stir from here till you have got a good rest and a cup of tea."

"The gig may perhaps take me back to the inn first," said Ronald, "for it is there I am staying—for the fishing," he added, unable to keep out of his eyes a half comic glance at the companion of his trouble.

"Indeed, you are going back to no inn," said Helen, "you are just going to stay at the Manse, where you will be much better attended to, and Lily, my dear, you'll come and see Mr. Lumsden,

that owes so much to you already ; and that will help to make him feel at home here."

But when Lily came downstairs, smoothed and brushed, with her hair trim, and the flush dying off her cheeks, and her skirt mended, though in many ways the accident had ended most fortunately, she could not meet the smile in the old minister's eyes.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

THERE was great excitement in the Tower when the gig from "the toun" was seen slowly climbing the brae. Almost everybody in the house was in commotion, and Beenie, half-crazy with anxiety, had been at the window for hours watching for Lily's return, and indulging in visions and conjectures which her companions knew nothing of. All that Dougal and Katrin thought of was an accident. Though, as they assured each other, Rory's bark was worse than his bite, it was yet quite possible that in one of his cantrips he might have thrown the inexperienced rider in her long skirt : and even if she was not hurt, she might have found it impossible to catch him again, and might have to toil home on foot, which would account for the lateness of the hour. Or she might have sprained her ankle, or even broken her arm as she fell, and been unable to move. When these fears began to take shape, the boy had been sent off flying on the black pony to the scene of the pic-nic, the only argument against this hypothesis being that, had any such accident happened, Rory by this time would, in all probability, have reached home by himself. Beenie, I need not say, was tormented by other fears. Was it possible that they had fled together, these two who had now fully discovered that they could not live without each other? Had he carried her away, as it had been on the cards he should have done three months ago? and a far better solution than any other of the problem. These ideas alternated in Robina's mind with the suggestion of an accident. She did not believe in an accident. Lily had always been masterful, able to manage anything that came in her way, "beast or bird," as Beenie said, and was it likely she would be beaten by Rory, a little Highland powny, when she had ridden big horses by Sir Robert's side, and never stumbled? Na. "She'll just have gone away

with him," Beenie said to herself, and though she felt wounded that the plan had not been revealed to her, she was not sorry, only very anxious, feeling that Lily would certainly find some opportunity of sending her a word, and telling her where to join them. "It is, maybe, the best way out of it," she said over and over again to herself—and accordingly she was less moved by Katrin's wailings than that good woman could understand. Katrin and Dougal were out upon the road, while Beenie kept her station at the window. And Dougal's fears for the young lady were increased by alarms about his pony, an older and dearer friend than Lily. "If the poor beast has broken his knees, I'll ne'er forgive myself for letting that bit lassie have the charge of him alone."

"The charge of him!" said his wife in high indignation, "and her that has, maybe, twisted her ankle, or broken her bonnie airm, the darlin,' and a' the fault of that ill willy beast. And it's us that has the chairge of her."

This argument silenced Dougal for the moment, but he still continued to think quite as much of Rory as of the young lady, whichever of the two was responsible for the trouble which had occurred. When the boy came back to report that there was nothing to be found at the old Brig but great marks on the ruin, as if somebody had "slithered down," branches torn away, and the herbage crushed at the bottom, the alarm in the house rose high. And Dougal had fixed his cap firmly on the top of his head, as a man prepared for any emergency, and taken his staff in his hand to take the short cut across the moor, and find out for himself what the catastrophe had been, when a shout from Sandy on the top of the bank, and Beenie at the window, stopped further proceedings. There was Lily, pale, but smiling, in the gig from the inn, and Rory tossing his red head, very indignant at the undignified position in which he found himself, tied to that shabby equipage. "The puir beast, just nickering with joy at the sight of home, but red with rage to be trailed at the tail of an inn geeg," Dougal said, hurrying to loose the rope and lead the sufferer in. He was not without concern for Lily, but she was evidently none the worse, and he asked no more.

"I have had such an adventure," she said, as soon as she was within hearing, "but I am not hurt, and nothing has happened to me. Such an

adventure! What do you think, Beenie? A gentleman climbed up the old Brig while we were there, and slipped and fell: and when I ran to see, who should it be but Mr. Lumsden—Ronald Lumsden—whom we used to see so much in Edinburgh.” Here Lily’s countenance bloomed so suddenly red out of her paleness, that Katrin had a shock of understanding, and saw it all in a moment, if not more than there was to see. “And he had sprained his ankle,” Lily said, a paleness following the flush, “he couldn’t move. You may fancy what a state we were in.”

“Eh,” said Katrin, with her eyes fixed on Lily’s face, “what a good thing Miss Eelen was with you—for she kens as much about that sort o’ thing as the doctor himsel.”

“I got him on the pony at last,” said Lily, “and we bound up his foot, and then we took him to the Manse. It was the nearest, and the doctor just at their door. But oh, what a race I had with the pony, leading him, and sometimes he led me till I had to run: and I put my foot through my skirt, see? We mended it up a little at the Manse, and drew it out of the gathers. But look here, a job for you, Beenie. And my hair came down about my shoulders—and if you had seen the figure I was, running along the road——”

“But Miss Eelen with ye made a’ right,” said Katrin, “ah, what a blessing that Miss Eelen was with ye.”

Lily was getting out of the gig, from the high seat of which she had hastened to make her first explanations. It was not an easy thing getting out of a high gig in those days, and “the geeg from the inn” was, naturally, without any of the latest improvements. She had to turn her back to the spectators, as she clambered down, and if her laugh sounded a little unsteady, that was quite natural. “She is, indeed, as good as the doctor,” she said, “if you had seen how she cut open the boot and made him comfortable! And Rory behaved very well, too,” she said, “I spoke to him in his ear as you do, Dougal. I said, ‘Rory, Rory, my bonnie man, go canny to-day—you can throw me to-morrow, if you like, and I’ll never mind, but oh, go canny to-day.’ And you did, Rory, you dear little fellow, and dragged me, with my hair flying like a wild creature, along the road,” she added with a laugh, taking the rough and tossing head into her hands, and aiming a kiss at Rory’s

shaggy forehead. But the pony was not used to such dainties, and tossed himself out of her hands.

“You’re awfu’ tired, Miss Lily, though you’re putting so good a face upon it, and awfu’ shaken with the excitement, and a’ that. And to think o’ you being the one to find him—just the right person, the one that knew him—and to think of him being here, Maister Lumsden, touring, or shooting, or something, I suppose.”

Beenie’s speech ended spasmodically in a fierce grip of the arm with which Lily checked her as she went upstairs. “What need have you,” said the young lady, in an angry whisper, “to burden your mind with lies? Say I have to do it, and oh, I hate it! but you have no need. Hold your tongue and keep your conscience free.”

“Eh, Miss Lily,” said Beenie in the same tone, “I’m no wanting to be better than you. If ye tell a lee, and it’s but an innocent lee, I’ll tell one too. If you’re punished for it, what am I that I shouldna take my share with my mistress? But about the spraining o’ the ankle, my bonnie dear, that’s a’ true?”

Lily answered with a laugh to the sudden doubt in Robina’s eyes. She was very much excited, too much so to feel how tired she was, and capable of nothing without either laughter or tears. “Oh yes, it’s quite true: and oh, Beenie, he is badly hurt and suffering a great deal of pain. Poor Ronald! But he will be safe in Helen’s hands. If he were only out of pain! Perhaps it is a good thing, Beenie. That is what he whispered when I came away. Oh, how hard it was to come away and leave him there ill, and his foot so bad! But I am to go down to-morrow, and it will be a duty to stay as long as I can to cheer him up and to save Helen trouble, who has so many other things to do. I am not hard-hearted: but he says himself if he were only out of pain—perhaps it’s a good thing.”

Here Lily stopped and cried, and murmured among her tears, “If it had only been me! it’s easier for a girl to bear pain than a man.”

“But if it had been you, Miss Lily, it would have been no advantage. You can go to him at the Manse, but he could not have come to you here.”

“That is true,” cried Lily, laughing, “you are a clever Beenie to think of that. But how am I to live till to-morrow, all the long night through, and all the morning without news?”

"A young gentleman doesna die of a sprained ankle," said Beenie, sedately, "and if you are a good bairn, and will go early to bed, and take care of yourself, I'll see that the boy goes into the town the first thing in the morning to hear how he is."

"You are a kind Beenie," cried Lily, clasping her arms about her maid's neck. But it was a long time before Robina succeeded in quieting the girl's excitement. She had to hear the story again half-a-dozen times over, now in its full reality, now in the form which it had to bear for the outside world, with all the tears and laughter which accompanied it. "And he grew so white, so white, I thought he was going to faint," said Lily, herself growing pale.

"I'm thankful ye were spared that. It is very distressing to see a person faint, Miss Lily."

"And then he cheered up and gave a grin in the middle of his pain: I will not call it a smile, for it was no more than a grin—half fun and half torture. Poor Ronald—oh, my poor lad, my poor lad!"

"He was a lucky lad to get you to do all that for him, Miss Lily."

"Me! What did it matter if it was me, or you, or a fishwife," said Lily, "when a man is in such dreadful pain?"

They discussed it over and over again from every point of view, until Lily fell asleep from sheer weariness in the hundredth repetition of the story. Beenie, for her part, was exceedingly discreet at supper that evening. Indeed, she was altogether too discreet to be successful with a quick observer like Katrin, who saw, by the extreme precautions of her friend, and the close-shut lips with which Beenie minced and bridled, and made little remarks about nothing in particular, that there was something to conceal. Katrin was very near to penetrating the mystery even now, but she said nothing except those somewhat ostentatious congratulations to all parties on the fact that Miss Eelen was there, which were designed to show the growing conviction that Miss Eelen was not there at all. Beenie was quite quick enough to perceive this, but she exercised much control over herself, and made no signs before Dougal. He was chiefly occupied by the address to Rory which Lily had made, which struck him as an excellent joke, and which he repeated to himself from time to time, with a laugh which came from the depths of his

being. "She said till him, 'Ye can throw me the morn, and welcome, if ye'll go canny the day.' Losh, what a spirit she has, that lassie, and the fun in her! 'Go canny the day, and ye can throw me, if ye like, the morn.' And Rory to take it a' in like a Christian!" He laughed till he held his sides, and then he said, feebly, "It'll be the death of me."

The joke did not strike the women as so brilliant. "I hope he'll no take her at her word," said Beenie.

"Na, na, he'll no take her at her word: he's ower much of a gentleman; but if he does you'll see she'll stand it and never a word in her head. That's what I call real spirit, 'feard at nothing. 'Go canny the day, and you can throw me, if you like, the morn.' I think I never heard anything so funny in a' my born days."

"You're easy pleased," said his wife, though she was quite inclined to consider Lily's speeches as brilliant, and herself as the flower of humankind, but to let a man suppose that he was the discoverer of all this was not to be thought of. She communicated, however, some of her suspicions to Dougal, for want of any other confidant, when they were alone in the stillness of their chamber. "I have my doubts," said Katrin, "that it was nae surprise to her at a' to find the gentleman, and that it was him that was the Miss Eelen that met her at the auld Brig."

"Him that was Miss Eelen? And how could he be Miss Eelen, a muckle man?" said Dougal.

"Oh ye gowk!" said his wife, and she put back her discoveries into her bosom, and said no more.

Lily was very restless next day until she was able to get away on her charitable mission. "I must go now," she said, "to help to take care of him, or Helen will have no time for her other business, and she has so much to do."

"You maun take care and no find another gentleman with a broken foot," said Katrin, "you mightn't be able to manage Rory so well a second time."

"Oh, I am not afraid of Rory," the girl cried. "I just speak to him, as Dougal does, in his ear."

"Mind you what you've promised him, Miss Lily," said that authority, chuckling, "he is to cawp you over his head, if he likes, the day."

"He'll not do that," cried Lily, confidently, waving her hand to the assembled household, who

were standing outside the door to see her start. What a diversion she was, with her comings and goings, her adventures and mishaps, to that good pair ! How dull it must have been for them before Lily came to excite their curiosity and brighten their sense of humour. Dougal returned to his work, shaking once more with a laugh that went down to his boots and thrilled him all over, saying to himself, "He's ower much of a gentleman to take her at her word ;" while Katrin stood shading her eyes with her hand, and looking wistfully after the young creature in her confidence and gaiety of youth. "Eh, but I hope the lad's worthy of her," was what Katrin said.

Ronald was lying once more upon the big haircloth sofa, as she had left him. He would not stay in bed, Helen lamented, though it would have been so much better for him. "But a simple sprain," she said, "no complication. If I could have persuaded him to bide quiet in his bed he would have been well at the end of the week : but nothing would please him but to be down here, limping downstairs, at the risk of a fall, with two sticks and only one foot. My heart was in my mouth at every step."

"But he is none the worse," cried Lily, "and I can understand Mr. Lumsden, Helen. It is far, far more cheery here, where he can see everything that is going on, and have you and Mr. Blythe to talk to. A sprain makes your ankle bad, but not your mind."

"That is true," said Ronald, "and what I have been labouring to say, but had not the wit. My ankle is bad, but not my mind. I am in no such hurry to get well as Miss Blythe thinks. Don't you see," he said, looking up in Lily's face, as she stood beside him, "in what clover I am here?"

Lily answered the look, but not the words. A tremulous sense of ease and happiness arose in her being. The moor was sweet when he was there, and to look for that hour in the evening had been enough for the first days to make her happy. But to start out to meet him, nobody knowing, glad as she had been to do it, cost Lily a pang. There are some people to whom the stolen joys are the most sweet, but Lily was not one of these. The clandestine wounded her sense of delicacy, if not her conscience. She was doing no wrong, she had said to herself, but yet it felt like wrong so long as it was secret,

so long as a certain amount of deception was necessary to procure it. She was like the housemaid, stealing out to meet her lover. To the housemaid there was nothing unbecoming in that, but there was to Lily. She had suffered even while she was happy. But now the clandestine was all over. The constant presence of the old minister, who regarded them with eyes in which there was too much insight and satire for Lily's peace of mind, was troublesome, but it was protection—it set her heart at rest. The accident restored all at once the ease of nature. "It is the best thing that could have happened," Ronald said, when Helen left them alone, and Mr. Blythe had hidden himself behind the large, broad sheet of *The Scotsman*, the new clever Whig paper, which had lately begun to bring the luxury of news twice a week to the most distant corners of the land. "I don't mean to get better at the end of the week. It was a dreadful business yesterday, but I see the advantage of it now."

"Was it so dreadful yesterday, poor Ronald?" she said in the voice of a dove, cooing at his ear.

"It was not delightful yesterday, though I had the sweetest Lily. But now I warn you, Lily, I mean to keep ill as long as I can. You will come and stay with me—it is your duty—for nobody knows me at Kinloch-Rugas, but only you, and you are the Good Samaritan. You put me on your own beast, and brought me to the inn."

"Oh, do not speak like that, do not put me in mind that we are both deceivers ! I have forgotten it, now that we are here."

"We are no deceivers," he said. "It is all quite true—you put me on your own beast. And where did you get all that strength, Lily ? You must have almost lifted me in your arms, you slender little thing, a heavy fellow like me !"

"Oh, you did very well on your one foot," said Lily, trying to laugh : but she shuddered and the tears came into her eyes. She was aching still with the strain that necessity had put upon her, but he did not think of that, he only thought how strong she was.

"Here you two," said the minister, "I'm going to read you a bit out of the paper. It is just full of stories, as good as if I had told them myself."

"Oh, never heed with your stories, father," said Helen, "keep them till Lily goes away, for she has

a wonderful way with her, and keeps things going. Our patient will not be dull while Lily is here."

Was that all she meant, or did Helen, too, suspect something? The two lovers interchanged a glance, half of alarm, half of laughter, but Helen went and came, unconscious, sometimes pausing to turn the cushion under the bad foot, or to suggest a more comfortable position, with nothing but kindness in her mild eyes.

#### CHAPTER XV.

RONALD was, as he had prophesied, a long time getting well. Even Helen was a little puzzled, she who thought no evil, at the persistency of his suffering; at the end of the second week he could indeed stumble about with his two sticks, but still complained of great pain when he tried to walk. The prolonged presence of the visitor began at last to become a little trouble, even to the hospitable Manse, where strangers were entertained so kindly, but where there was but one maid-of-all-work, with the occasional services, chiefly outdoors, of the minister's man—and an invalid of Ronald's robust character, whose presence necessitated better fare and gave a great deal of additional work, was a serious addition, both to the expenses and labours of the house. It would have been much against the traditions of the Manse to betray this in any way; but there was no doubt that the minister was a little more sharp in his speeches, and apt to throw a secret dart, in the disguise of a jest, at the guest whose convalescence was so prolonged. Lily rode down from Dalrugas every day, to help to nurse the patient, that Helen might not have the whole burden of his helplessness on her shoulders; but Lily, too, became aware that, delightful though this freedom of meeting was, and the long hours of intercourse which were made legitimate as being a form of duty, they were beginning to last too long and awaken uneasy thoughts. Helen, who was so tender to her at first, became a little wistful as the days went on. The gentle creature could think no harm, but perhaps it was her father's remarks which put it into her head that the two young people were making a convenience of her hospitality, and that all was not honest in the tale which had brought so unlooked for a visitor under the shelter of her roof. And

then the village, as was inevitable, made many remarks. "Bless me, but the young leddy at Dalrugas is an awfu' constant visitor, Miss Eelen. She comes just as if she was coming to her lessons every morning at the same hour." "She is the kindest heart in the world," said Helen. "You see this gentleman that sprained his foot is a friend of her uncle's, and she could not take him to Dalrugas, where there is nobody but servants; and she will not let me have all the trouble of him. A man, when he is ill, takes a great deal of attendance," said the minister's daughter, with a smile.

"Losh, I would just let him attend upon himself," said one.

"He should send for a sister, or somebody belonging to him," said another.

"Oh, not that," said Helen, "I could not put up a lady, there is but little room in the Manse—and with Miss Lily's help we can pull through."

"He should get an easy post-chaise from Aberdeen, there's plenty easy carriages to be got there nowadays, and go back to his ain folk. He's a son of Lumsden, of Pontalloch, they tell me—that's not so far but that he might get there in a day."

"I have no doubt he will do that as soon as he is well enough," said Helen: but all these remarks made her uneasy. Impossible for Scotch hospitality to give a hint, to intimate a thought, that the visitor had overstayed his welcome—and a man that had been hurt and was, perhaps, still suffering! "No, no," she said, shaking her head. But it troubled her gentle mind that Lily's visits should be so remarked, and it was strange—or was it only the village gossip that made her feel that it was strange? Lily perceived all this with an uneasy perception of new elements in the air.

"Ronald," she said one day when they were alone for a few minutes, "you could put your foot to the ground without hurting when you try. You will have to go away."

"Why should I go away?" he said with a laugh. "I am very comfortable. It is not luxury, but it does very well, when I see my Lily every day—"

"But oh," she cried, the colour coming to her cheeks, which had been growing pale these few days—"there are things of more consequence than Lily! The Manse people are not rich—"

"You need not tell me that," he said, looking round at the shabby furniture with a smile.

"But oh, Ronald, you don't see! They try to get nice things for you, they spend a great deal of trouble upon you, and they were glad at first—but it is now a fortnight."

"Lily, my love," he said quickly, "if you have ceased to care for this chance of meeting every day—if you want me to go away, of course I will go."

"Do you think it likely I should have ceased to care?" she said, with tears in her eyes—"but we must think of other people too."

"Thinking of other people is generally a mistake. We all know how to take care of ourselves best—unless it is here and there some one like you, if there is any one like my Lily. But, dear, I give very little trouble. What is there to do for me?—another bed to make, another knife and fork—or spoon, I should say, for we have broth, broth, and nothing but broth—and a little grouse now and then, sent to them by somebody, and therefore costing nothing."

"It is ungenerous to say that," Lily cried.

"My dearest, you will tell me what present I can send them when at last I am forced to tear myself away. A good present that will make up to them—a chest of tea, or a barrel of wine—or—but I don't want to go away, Lily: I would rather stay here and see you every day until I am forced to go back to my work."

"Oh, and so would I!" cried Lily: "but," she added with a sigh, "we must think of them. Mr. Blythe sits always, always in this room. It is the sunny room in the house, and he likes it best. But you see he has gone into his little study this day or two—which is very dreary—all because we are here."

"Very considerate of him," said Ronald, with a laugh, "if that is a reason for going away, that they now leave us sometimes alone, I fear it will not move me, Lily: you must find a better than that."

"Oh, Ronald, will you not see?" cried Lily, in distress. But what could a girl do? She could not put understanding into his eyes, nor consideration into his heart. He was willing to take advantage of these good people, and the inducement was strong. She spoke against her own heart when she urged him to go away, and she was glad to be laughed out of her scruples, to be told of the "good present" that would make up

for everything, of the gratitude that he would always feel, and his conviction that he gave very little trouble, and added next to nothing to their expenses. "Broth is not expensive," he said, "and the grouse, you know, Lily, the grouse!" Lily turned her head away, sick at heart. Oh, it was not how he should speak of the people who were so kind to him; but still, when she mounted Rory—now quite docile, and accustomed to trot every day into Kinloch-Rugas—in the afternoon, she could not but be glad to think that she might still come to-morrow, that there was at least another day.

One of these afternoons the parlour was full of people, under whose eyes Lily could not continue to sit by the side of the sofa and minister to the robust invalid's wants. There was the doctor, who gave him a little slap on his leg and said, "I congratulate ye on a perfect cure. You can get up and walk when you like, like the man in the Bible." And the schoolmaster's wife, who said, "Eh, what a good thing for you, Mr. Lumsden, and you been on your back so long." And there was the assistant and successor, Mr. Douglas, who was visibly anxious to get rid of all interlopers and speak a word to Helen. Oh, why did he not follow Helen when she went out to open the door for her visitors and leave Lily free to say once more to Ronald, but more energetically, "You must go."

"I was wanting to say, sir," said Mr. Douglas, "and I may add that I have Miss Eelen's opinion all on my side, that I would like very much if you would say a parting word to the lads that are going out to Canada. We have taken a great deal of trouble with them, and a word from the minister—"

"You are the minister yourself, Douglas, they know more of you than they do of me."

"Not so, Mr. Blythe. I am your assistant, and Miss Eelen, she is your daughter, and the best friend they ever had; but it's your blessing the callants want, and a word from you—"

"My blessing!" the old man said, with an uneasy laugh, "you're forgetting, my young man, that there's no sacerdotal pretensions in the auld Kirk."

"You blessed them when they were christened, sir, and you blessed them and gave them the right hand of fellowship when they came to the Lord's table. I'm thinking nothing of sacerdotalism. I'm thinking of human nature. We have no



bishops, but while we have ordained ministers, we must always have fathers in God."

Mr. Blythe had never been of this new fangled type of devotion. He had been an old Moderate, very shy of over much religion, and relying upon habit and tradition and a good deal of wholesome neglect. But the young man's earnestness, backed as it was by the serious light in his Helen's eyes, brought a colour to his old face. He was a little ashamed of the importance given to him, and half angry at the young people's high-flown notions. "I am not sure," he said, "that I go with you, Douglas, nor with Eelen either, in your dealings with these lads. You just cultivate a kind of forced religion in them, that makes a fine show for a moment—it's the seed that fell by the wayside and sprang up quickly, but had no root in itself."

"We can never tell that, sir," said the assistant, "it may help them when they have no ordinances to mind them of their duty. If they remember their Creator in the days of their youth—"

"Deed," said the old minister, "it is just as often as not to forget everything all the quicker when they come to man's estate. Solomon knew many things, but not the lads in a parish so near the Highlant line."

"Anyway, father, it will be kindly like, and them going so far, far away."

"That is just it," said Mr. Blythe, "why should they go far, far away? Why couldn't ye let them jog on as their fathers did before them? I'm not an advocate for emigration. There are plenty of things the lads could do, without leaving their own country. Let them go to Glasgow, where there's work for everybody—or to the south. You think you can do everything with your arrangements and your exhortations, and looking after more than ye were ever asked to look after. I have never approved of all these meetings and things, and your classes and your lessons, and all the fyke you make about a few country callants. Let them alone to their fathers' advice and their mothers.' You may be sure the women will all warn them to keep off the drink—and much good it will do, whatever you may say, either them or you."

"But just a word of farewell, sir," pleaded the assistant, "we ask no more."

"And that is just a great deal too much, in present circumstances," cried the old minister. "Where would ye have me speak to them—a dozen

big country lads, like colts out of the stable? I cannot go out to the cold vestry at night, me that seldom leaves the house at all. And the dining-room is too small, and what other room have we free? Eelen, you know that as well as me. I cannot have them up in my bed-chamber; and the kitchen, with lasses in it, would be no place for such a ceremonial. No, no, we have no room, that is true."

"I hope, sir," said Ronald from his sofa "you are not saying this from consideration for me. I'd like nothing better than to see the boys, and hear your address to them. It would be good, I am sure, and I am as much in need of good advice as any of them can be."

"You are very considerate, Mr. Lumsden," said the minister, after a pause, "it is a great thing to have an inmate that takes so much thought: but how can I tell that it would not be bad for you in your delicate state, with your nurses at your side all the day?"

"Delicate! I am not delicate!" cried Ronald, with a flush, "it is only, you know, this confounded foot."

"Well, Douglas," said the minister, "between Mr. Lumsden's confoondit foot and your confoondit pertinacity, what am I to do? Since your patient, Eelen, is so kind and permits the use of our best parlour, have them in, have ben your callants. I must not be less gracious than my own guest," the old man said.

Lily went away trembling after this scene, giving Ronald a beseeching glance—but she had no opportunity for a word. Next day, still tremulous, she returned to find him still there, a little defiant, not to be driven out. But a short time after, when she was again preparing to go in to the "toun"—without any pleasant looks now from her household, or complaisance on the part of Dougal, who openly bemoaned his pony—the whole population of Dalrugas turned out, to see the inn "geeg" once more climbing the brae. It contained Ronald and his portmanteau, speeding off to catch the coach, but incapable, as he said, in the hearing of everybody, of going away without thanking and saying farewell to his kind nurse. "Do you know what this young lady did for me?" he said to the little company, which included Rory, ready saddled, and the black pony harnessed, with the boy at his head. "She lifted

me, I think, from where I lay, and put me on her own beast, like the Good Samaritan. She was more than the Good Samaritan to me. Look at her, like a fairy princess, and me a heavy lump, almost fainting, and with but one foot. That is what charity can do."

"Well, it was a wonderful thing," Katrin allowed, "but maist more than that was riding down ance errand to the town to take care of ye every day."

"Ah, that was for Miss Blythe's sake and not mine," he said. "May I come in, Miss Ramsay, to give you her message? Oh, Robina, I am glad to see you there: I can carry the last news to Sir Robert, and tell him how both mistress and maid are thriving on the moor."

It was all false, false, as false as words that were true enough in themselves could be. Lily ran up the spiral stair, while Beenie helped him to follow. The girl's heart was beating high with more sensations than she could discriminate. This was the parting, then, after so long a time together, the farewell, which was more dreadful than words could say—and yet she was glad he was going. He was her own true love, and nobody was like him in the world, and yet Lily's mind revolted against every word he said.

"Why did you say all that?" she cried, breathless, when they were alone, "it was not wanted, surely, here."

"Necessary fibs," he said, "you are too particular, Lily—for me that am only carrying out my rôle. You see I am obeying you and going away at last."

"Oh, Ronald, it was not that I wanted you to go away."

"No, if I could have gone away, yet stayed all the same—but one can't do two opposite things at the same time. And, Lily, it must be good-bye now—for a little while: you will look out for me at the new year."

"Do you call it just a little while to the new year?" she cried, with the tears in her eyes.

"Three months, or a little more. I shall not come to Kinloch-Rugas: I'll find a lodging in some little farm: and in the meantime you will write to me, Lily, and I will write to you."

"Yes, Ronald," she said, giving him both her hands. Was this to be all? It was not for her to ask, it was for him to say—

"My bonnie Lily! If I could but carry you off, never to part more! But if nothing happens to release you, if Sir Robert does not relent, mind, my dearest, we must make up our minds and take it into our own hands. He is not to keep us apart for ever. You will let me know all that goes on, and whether those people downstairs have reported the matter: and I, for my part, will take my measures. When we meet again everything will be clearer. And Lily, on your side, you will tell me everything, that we may see our way."

"There will be nothing to tell you, Ronald. There will be no report sent—Uncle Robert, I think, has forgotten my existence. There will be nothing, nothing to say, but that it is weary living alone here on the moor."

"Not more weary than my life in Edinburgh, pacing up and down the Parliament House, and looking out for work—but we'll see what is going to happen before the new year: and I will send the present to those good Manse folk, and you will keep up with them, for they may be very useful friends. Is it time for me to go? Well, I will go if I must: and good-bye for the present, my darling, good-bye till the new year."

Was it possible that he was gone, that it was all over, and Lily left again alone on the moor? She ran to Beenie's room, which was on the other side of the house, to watch the inn "geeg" as long as it was in sight. Nothing is ever said of what is intended to be said in a hasty last meeting like this. It was worse than no meeting at all, leaving all the ravelled ends of parting. And was it true that all was over, and Ronald gone and nothing more to be done or said?

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE dead calm into which Lily fell after all the agitations of this wonderful period was like death itself, she thought, after the tumult and commotion of a climax of life. Those days during which she had trotted down to the village on Rory, the mountain breezes in her face, and all the warmest emotions stirred in her breast, days full of anxiety and expectation, sometimes of more painful feelings, agitations of all kinds, but threaded through and through with the consciousness that for hours to come she would be with her

lover, ministering to his wants, hearing him speak, going over and over with him, in the low-voiced talk (to which the old minister behind his newspaper gave, or was supposed to give, no heed) their own prospects and hopes, their plans for the future—all those things that are more engrossing and delightful to talk of than any other subjects in heaven or earth—were different from all the days that had passed over her before. Her youthful existence was like a dream, thrown back into the distance by the superior force and meaning of all that had happened since : both the loneliness and the society, the bitter time of self-experience and solitude, the joy of the re-union, the love so crossed and mingled, which had grown with greater intensity with every chance. The little simple Lily who had “fallen in love,” as she thought, with Ronald Lumsden, as she might have fallen in love with any one of a half-dozen of young men, was very, very different from the Lily who had been torn out of her natural life on his account, who had doubted him and found him wanting, who had been converted into the faith of an enthusiast in him, and conviction that it was she, and not he, that was in the wrong. Their stolen meetings on the moor, which had startled her back into the joy of existence, which had been so few, yet so sweet ; their little meal together, which was like a high ceremony and sacrament of a deeper love and union ; the tremendous excitement of the accident, and the agitated chapter of constant yet disturbed intercourse which followed (disturbed at last by a renewed creeping in of the old doubts, and anxiety to push him forward, to make him act, to make him think not always of himself, as he was so apt to do) all these things had formed an epoch in her life, behind which everything was childish and vague. She herself was not the same. It happens often in a woman's life that the change from youth and its lighter atmosphere of natural, simple things comes before the mind is developed, before the character is able to bear that wonderful transformation. Lily at first had been essentially in this condition. Her trial came to her before she had strength for it, and every new point of progress was marked, so to speak, with a new wound, quickly healed over, as became her youth, yet leaving a scar, as all internal wounds do. Even when the thrill of happiness had been in her young frame and mind it had been intensified by

a thrill of pain : the pang of secrecy, the sharp sting of falsehood—falsehood which was abhorrent to Lily's nature. She had laughed as other girls laugh at the stratagems of lovers, their devices to escape the observation of jealous parents, the evils that are said to be legitimate in love and war. Nobody is so severe as to judge harshly these aberrations from duty. Even the sternest parent smiles at them when they are not directed against himself. But when it came to inventing a story day by day ; when it came to deceiving Katrin, with her sharp eyes, at one end, and Helen's unsuspecting soul at the other—then Lily could not bear the tangled web in which she had wound herself. She had to go on, it was too late to tell the truth now, she had said to herself, day by day, her heart aching from those thanks which Helen showered upon her for her kind attendance upon the unexpected guest. “If it had not been for you, Lily, what could I have done?” the minister's daughter had said, again and again : and Lily's heart had grown sick in the midst of her strained and painful happiness, at Ronald's side.

Now this was over and another phase came. She had urged him to go, feeling the position untenable any longer, in a way which his robust self-confidence had not felt : but when suddenly he had taken the step she urged, Lily felt herself flung back upon herself, the words taken out of her mouth, and the meaning from her mind. All her little fabric of life tumbled down about her. Those habits which are formed so quickly, which a few days suffice to bind upon the soul like iron, dropped from her, and she felt as if the framework by which she was sustained had broken down, and she could no longer hold herself erect. Her life seemed suddenly to have lost all its meaning—all its occupations. There was no sense in going on, no reason for its continuance merely to eat meals, to take walks, to go to bed and to get up again. She looked behind her, to the immediate past, with a pang, and before her, to the immediate future, with a blank sense of vacancy, which was almost despair. When the “geeg” that carried him away was gone quite out of sight, Lily went slowly back to the drawing-room, and seated herself at the window where she had first seen him appearing across the moor. It had been then all ablaze with the heather, which now had died away into rustling bunches of dead flowers, all dried like

husks upon the stalks, gray and dreary, like the dull evening of a glowing day. Her heart beat dull with the reverberation of all those convulsions that had gone through it. And now they were all over, like the glow of the heather—and what was before her? The winter creeping on, with its short days and long nights, storm and rain, when even Rory would not face the keen wind; solitude unbroken for weeks and months; and beyond that what was there to look forward to? Oh, if it had been but poverty—the little flat under the roofs, in a tall Edinburgh house, and to work her fingers to the bone! Poor Lily, who knew so little what working your fingers to the bone meant! who thought that would be blessedness beside one you loved, and in the world where you were born. So, no doubt, it would have been: but yet, in all probability, though she did not intend it so, it would have been Robina's fingers, not hers, that were worked to the bone.

I would not have the reader think that, translated into ordinary parlance, all this meant the vulgar fact that Lily was longing to be married, and would not accept the counsels of patience and wait, though she was only twenty-three, and had so many, many years before her. Had Ronald been an eager lover, ready to brave fortune for her sake, and consider that, for love, the world were well lost, she would, no doubt, have taken the other side of the question, and preached patience to him, and borne her own part of the burden with a smile. But it is very different when it is the lover who is prudent, and when the girl, with an unsatisfied heart, has to wait and know that her happiness, her society, her life, are of less value to him than the fortune which he hopes, by patience, to secure along with her; also that she can do nothing to emancipate herself, nothing to escape from whatever painful circumstances may surround her, till he gives the word, which he shows no inclination to give, and which womanly pride and feeling forbid her even to suggest: also, and above all, that in his hesitation, in his prudence and delay, he is falling short of the ideal which every lover should fulfil or lose his place and power. This was the worst of all. Not only that Ronald was acting so, but that it was so far, far different from the manner in which Ronald, had he been the Ronald she thought, would have acted. This gave the bitterness under which

Lily's heart sank. Again, she did not know what he meant to do, or if he meant to do anything, or if she were to remain as she was, perhaps for long years, consuming her heart in loneliness and vacancy, diversified by moments of clandestine meeting and unlovely happiness, bought by deceit. She could not again yield to that, she said to herself, with passionate tears. Though her heart were to break, she would not heal it at the cost of lies. It might not have given Lily many complications, perhaps, to have deceived her uncle—but to deceive Helen, to deceive kind Katrin and Dougal, to give false accounts of the simplest circumstances, oh! no, no, never again, never again. She said this to herself, with passionate tears falling like rain, as she sat at her lonely window on many a dreary day, straining her eyes across the moor, where the rain so often fell to double the effect of those tears. Let them give each other up mutually, let them part and be done with it, if he chose: but to deceive everybody, and meet secretly, or meet openly upon the falsest of pretensions, oh! no, no, Lily said to herself, never more.

But to say how these decisions melted, when, in the heart of the winter, there began to dawn the promise of the new year, it is easy to imagine, and, I do not need to say. Lily, it must be remembered, had no one but Ronald to represent to her happiness and life. She had never had many people to love—her father and mother had both died before she was old enough to know them. She had no aunt, though that is often an unsatisfactory relation, not even cousins whom she knew, which is strange to think of in Scotland—nobody to take her part or whom she could repose her heart upon but Beenie, her maid, to whom Lily's concerns were her own sublimated, and who could only agree in and intensify Lily's own natural impulses and thoughts. Ronald was all she had, the only one who could help her, the sole deliverer possible, and opener to her of the gates of life. To be sure, she might have renounced him and so returned to her uncle, to be dragged about in a back seat of his chariot, if not at its wheels: though, indeed, even this was problematical, for Sir Robert was a selfish old man, who was, on the whole, very glad to have got rid of the burden of a young woman to take about with him, and considered that she would do very well at the old Tower, and

might be quite content with such a quiet and comfortable home, a good cook (which Katrin was) a pony to ride upon, and the run of the moor. He had half forgotten her existence by this time, as Lily divined, and was absent "abroad" in that vague and wide world, of which stayers at home in Scotland knew so much less than everybody knows now. And, as the time approached for Ronald's return, Lily, in her longing for him, added to her longing for something, for some one, for society, emancipation, something that was life, began to forget all her old aches and troubles of mind: the doubts flew away, she remembered only that Ronald was coming, that he was coming, that the sun was about to shine again, that there was happiness in prospect, love, and company, and talk, and sympathy, and all that is good in youth and life. This time she must manage so that the deceit of old would be necessary no longer. Helen should know that the two who had met so often in the Manse parlour, had come to love each other—what so natural, what so fitting, seeing they had spent so much time together under her own wing, and her own mild eyes? And Katrin and Dougal should be permitted to see what Lily was very sure they had divined already, that the poor gentleman whom Lily had nursed so faithfully, was more to her than any other gentleman in the world. He should come to Dalrugas to see her, and be with her openly as her lover in the sight of all men. If Sir Robert heard of it, why then she must escape, she must fly, the pair must at last take it, as Ronald had said, into their own hands—and Lily did not feel that she would be very sorry if this took place. At all events, now everything should be open and honest, clandestine no more.

It seemed as if he had come to the same decision when he arrived on the night, which was then called in Scotland, and is perhaps still to some extent, Hogmanay—why I do not know, nor I believe does any one—the last night of the year. He came in the early twilight, when the short, dark day was ending, and the long, cheerful evening about to begin. What a cheerful evening it was, the fire so bright, the candles twinkling, the curtains drawn, and from the kitchen the sound of the children singing, who had come out in a band all the way from the village to call upon Katrin:

"Get up, Gudewife, and shake your feathers,  
And dinna think that we are beggars,  
For we are bairns, come out to play,  
Get up and gie's our Hogmanay."

Lily was about to go down, flying down the spiral stairs, her heart beating loud with expectation, wondering breathlessly when he would come, how he would come, who alone could bring the Hogmanay cheer to her, and, in the meantime ready, for pure excitement, and to keep herself still, to join the women in the kitchen, and fill the children's wallets with cakes, cakes *par excellence*, the oatmeal cakes to wit, which are still what is meant in Scotland by that word, baked thin and crisp, and fresh from the girdle, making a pleasant smell: and over and above these with shortbread, in fine, brown farls, the true new year's dainty, and great pieces of bun, the Scotch bun which is something between a plum pudding and the Pan Giallo of the Romans, a mass of fruit held together by flour and water. Great provision of these delights was in the kitchen, which was all "redd up" and shining for the festival, with Katrin in her best cap, and Beenie in a silk gown and muslin apron, a resplendent figure. A band of "guisards" had accompanied the children, ready to enact some scene of the primitive drama of pre-historic tradition. Lily was hastening down to join this party, in a white dress which she too had put on in honour of the occasion. The kitchen was very noisy, full of these visitors, and nobody but she heard the summons at the big hall door. Lily hesitated for a moment, her heart giving a bound as loud as the knock—then opened it. And there he stood—the hero and the centre of all!

"And, eh, what a lucky thing to come this night that Miss Lily may have her ploy too! You will just stop and eat your bit dinner with her, Maister Lumsden," Katrin cried.

"Will it be a ploy for Miss Lily? I would like to be sure of that."

"Eh, nae need to pit it in words," said Katrin, "look at her bonnie e'en: and reason good, seeing that she has never spoken to one of her own kind, and least of all to a young gentleman since the day gaed away."

"I am staying at Tam, the shepherd's, on the other side of the moor," said Ronald.

"Losh me! at Tam the shepherd's, for the shootin'?" she asked, in a tone of consternation.

"Well," he said, with a laugh, "you can judge, Katrin, for yourself."

"Ay, ay," she said, brightening all over, "I judge for myself, sir, and I see it's just the auld story. Tam the shepherd's an awfu' haverel—but his wife's an honest woman: and clean," she added, "as far as she kens. But you shall have a good dinner with Miss Lily, I promise you, for once in a way."

Lily only half listened, but she heard all that was said. And her heart danced to see his open look, and the words in which there was no pretence of shooting, or any reason, save the evident one, for his presence there. The excuses were all over, there was to be no more deception. Honestly he came as her lover, endeavouring to throw no dust in the eyes of her humble guardians. If they had been noble guardians, holding her fate in their hands, Lily could not have been more happy. They were not to be deceived. Openness and honesty were to be around her in the house which was her home. What was wanted but this, to make her the happiest girl that ever piled shortbread into a child's wallet in honour of Hogmanay, and the New Year which was coming to-morrow? A new year, a new life, a different world! Katrin came up to her with half-affected horror and tender kindness, grasping her arm, "Eh, Miss Lily," she cried, "you'll just ruin the family, and we'll no have a single farl of shortbread left for our ain use: and the morn's the New Year! Ye are giving everything away. Na, na, we must mind ourself a wee. No more for you, my wee man. Miss Lily's just ower good to you. Run up the stairs, my bonnie leddy, for Beenie is setting the table, and you'll get your dinner, you and the gentleman, before the guisards begin."

"The gentleman!" Lily felt her countenance flame, as she laughed and turned away. "How kind you are, Katrin," she said, "to provide me with company, too, me that never sees anybody."

"Am I no kind?" cried Katrin in triumph, "and him for coming just at the right moment? I am awfu' pleased that you have a pairty of your ain to bring in a good New Year."

How strange, how delightful it was to sit down opposite to him at the table, to eat Katrin's excellent dinner, which, though it was almost impromptu, was so good—trout and game, the Highland luxuries which were, indeed, almost daily

bread on the edge of the moor, but not to Ronald, who amid all their happiness was man enough to like his dinner and praise it. "This is how we shall sit at our own table, and laugh at all our little troubles when they are over," he said.

"Oh, Ronald!" said Lily, with a little cloud in the midst of joy. They might be little troubles to him, but not to her, all lonely in the wilderness.

"At all events, they will soon be over," he said. His eyes were bright and his tones assured—there was no longer any doubt in his look, which she examined in the moments when he was not looking at her, with an anxious criticism. "And tell me about the good folk at the Manse, and kind Miss Eelen and her assistant and successor. Is he to be her assistant too, as well as her father's? I had a famous letter from the old gentleman about the wine I sent him. And Lily, I think that with very little trouble I will get him to do all we want, as soon as you can make up your mind to it. After all this time we must not have any more delay."

"To do all we want?" she said, looking up at him with surprise. The dinner was over by this time, and they had left the table and were standing by the fire.

"Yes," he said, "what do we want but to belong to each other, Lily? You don't need grand gowns or all the world at your wedding. Oh, yes, I should have liked to see my Lily with all her friends about her, and none so sweet as herself. But since we cannot do that, why should we mind it? when the old minister here can make everything right in half an hour?"

"Ronald," she said, with a gasp, "you take away my breath!"

"Why," he cried, "is not this what has been in our minds for ever so long? Have you not promised however poor I was, in whatever straits—"

"Yes, yes, there is no question of that."

"And why, then, should it take away your breath? My bonnie Lily, is it not an old bargain now? We have waited and waited, but nothing has come of waiting. And Providence has put us in a quiet place, with nothing but friends round. And a good old minister, a kind old fellow, who likes a good glass of wine, and knows what he's drinking!" He laughed at this as he drew her closer towards him. "Lily, with everything in our favour, you will not put me off, and make a hesitation now?"

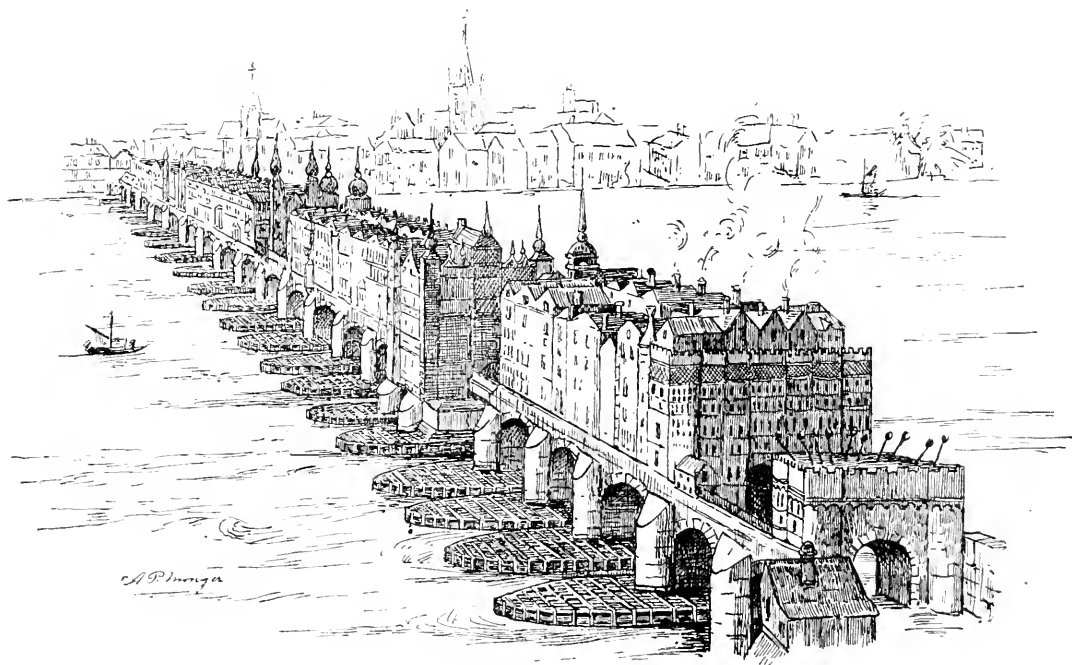
Oh, this was not quite the way, not the way she looked for! Yet she drew her breath hard, that breath which fluttered in spite of herself, and put both her hands in his. No, after so long waiting, why should she make a hesitation now? And then they went down to the kitchen together, arm in arm, Lily yielding to the delightful

consciousness that there was no need for concealment, to see the guisards act their primitive drama, and to bring in the New Year.

Oh, the New Year! which was coming in amid that rustic mirth, among those true, kind, humble friends to whom the young pair were as gods, in the glory of their love and youth. Lily trembled in her joy, what bride does not? What would it bring to them, that New Year?

*(To be continued.)*





OLD LONDON BRIDGE.

## TRAVELLING IN THE OLDEN TIMES.

BY H. A. PAGE.

ONE of the first things we must do in trying to form a picture of a past time is to loose ourselves from the present. We must get quit of things as they are, and bring some imagination into play, to reproduce them as they were. In speaking of the England of the middle ages we must wipe wholly out of our minds the map of the country as it is familiar to us. There are no great towns—even London was then, by comparison, but a larger village. There are few roads, those there are being in parts rough and hazardous. The forests still spread over immense areas, wherein roam wolves, wild boar and deer, and other large game. Here and there, too, are vast marshes, where great birds, now extinct altogether, found a home—the bittern, the great bustard, and many others. The vast forests, which provided sport for kings and nobles, also afforded shelter for outlaws, villains out of bond, Robin Hoods, and groups of discontented adventurers. The main safety in travelling was company: hence pilgrimages in which devotion to saints and shrines was made the excuse for indulging in many kinds of enjoyment and busi-

ness, as is well seen in Chaucer's "Canterbury Pilgrims," where others besides Harry Baily, the landlord, had matters and interests in hand beyond religious observances.

In many regions the roads were so bad that carriages were not available, or it may be that the badness of the roads had acted as a drawback on improved carriage building, for the demand was slight—men and women alike being trained to ride on horseback. In various representative pictures of the middle ages to be found in the British Museum, the ladies as well as the men are portrayed as riding astride. One represents a lady and her lover on horseback going a-hawking, and both are exactly in the same position. Chaucer's "wife of Bath" is not only so pictured, but with large spurs on her heels, as is justified by Chaucer's line—

"An on here heels great spores she wore."

Riding sidewise did not spread and become general till towards the end of the fourteenth century, though Chaucer's "nonne-prioress" is,



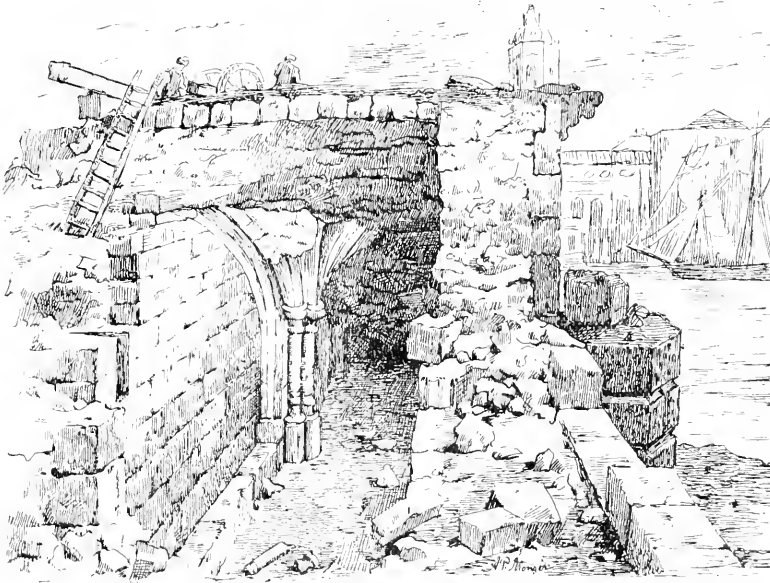
probably erroneously, represented riding sideways on the Ellesmere Papers of the fifteenth century.

The inns of the time, as we shall see in a future paper, were very different from the inns of our time, save, with some exception, in the larger towns, where the buildings were invariably grouped round a square courtyard. They were, for the most part, merely roadside resting-places, or village public-houses, where the accommodation was of the slightest. Society was so constituted that all or nearly all which was needed to supply the wants of all was produced at home: therefore trade, in the enlarged sense as we now understand it, had not yet sprung up. The power of the clergy was felt in many ways. They took care to make themselves necessary, working cunningly into life as it then was. Nor were the monks less assiduous and astute. The monasteries were the great resting-places—the big folks inside, and the common people in a guest-house which was attached to each monastery. This was only one of the

many services the monks performed for the general benefit. They were great builders, as churches and cathedrals exist to show; and, if it be true, as some say, that bridge-building friars did not appear in England, it is clear that the monks accepted their responsibility for roads and bridges, and the spirit of improvement was diffused among them. They gave the sanction of their spiritual authority to promote the repair of roads, and the erection and maintenance of bridges. They promised prayers and absolution to those who would give money or labour for this cause, and the terms in which they did so are very curious and interesting. Gradually bridge-building guilds,

or lay brotherhoods, animated by the religious spirit, were formed with this one object; and hence it was that these old bridges were not only dedicated to saints, but frequently had chapels erected upon them in which the passenger could at once say his prayers and make an offering to the bridge and its patron-saint. Old London Bridge—a fine specimen of this kind of structure—was dedicated to St. Thomas, of Canterbury, and had on it chapels and houses—none such house being true to its name—a building on which much skill and taste had been spent. It remained the only bridge across the London Thames till the middle of the eighteenth century. Bow bridge was dedicated to St. Catherine; and one of these wonderful bridges,

which still exists at Wakefield, has on it a chapel of imposing proportions and elaborate finish, dedicated to the Virgin. This foundation dates from about 1350, and Edward III., by a charter subscribed at Wakefield, settled “£10 per annum on William Kaye and William Bull, and their



THE CHAPEL ON OLD LONDON BRIDGE.

successors forever, to perform Divine service in a chapel newly built on the bridge at Wakefield.” Leland speaks of those structures in these terms: “A faire bridge of stone of nine arches, under which runneth the river of Calder, and on the east side of this bridge is a right goodly Chapel of Our Lady, and two cantuarie preestes founded in it.”

The Bishops were, to their honour, very jealous and zealous in the matter of road and bridge building. Had it not been for their activity and the foundation of such Brotherhoods as that of the Holy Cross, in Birmingham, even the valuable roads that were left as relics of the Roman occupation, would probably have been destroyed and

defaced by time. Richard de Kellawe, Bishop of Durham from 1311-1316, remitted part of the penalties of the sins of those who would aid the building. Here is one memorandum of the kind:—

“His lordship grants forty days’ indulgence to all who will draw from the treasure God has given them valuable and charitable aid towards the building and repair of Botyton Bridge.”

Forty days’ indulgence is also granted for the great road from Brotherton to Ferrybridge in these quaint and characteristic terms:—

“Persuaded that the minds of the faithful are more ready to attach themselves to *pious works*, when they have received the salutary encouragement of fuller indulgences, trusting in the mercy of God Almighty, and the merits and prayers of the glorious Virgin, His Mother, of St. Peter, St. Paul, and of the most holy confessor, Cuthbert our patron, and all saints, we remit forty days of the penances imposed on all our parishioners and others, sincerely contrite and confessed of their sins, who shall help by their charitable gifts, or *by their bodily labour*, in the building or in the maintenance of the causeway between Brotherton and Ferrybridge, where a great many people pass by.”\*

The peculiarities in the form of many of these old bridges resulted from the fact that available portions of the old one were adopted, strengthened, and built over, or built round. Hence many angularities, or what to the looker-on, ignorant of the circumstances, would have seemed the merest caprices, which, however, in not a few cases, yielded what was richly quaint and picturesque, as is

well seen for example, in the old three-branched bridge at Crowland.

In not a few cases, in the middle ages, a hermit

\* Mr. Jusserand, in his “English Wayfaring Life” (Unwin), gives many other instances of notability.

fixed his cell close to a bridge with a chapel on it, and thus he added to its sanctity, and maintained a sense of the spiritual association which had been so active in its construction. If we had in England none of the remarkable religious order founded in the twelfth century, called *Pontife* Brothers, or makers of bridges (Latin *pons*, bridge)—which only modified and made practical the title of the Pope himself, *Pontiff*, which he derived from Roman times—we certainly had many who were true *pontife* Brothers in spirit.

These bridges were supported from three sources: from endowments, from tolls, and from offerings; and sometimes bridges, too, ranked as proprietors of real estate, having lands attached to them. Where the bridges were without land or endowment, the tolls paid and gifts presented often proved too little for the effective maintenance of the structure: and only the unceasing interest and activity of monks and bishops, in a great many cases, ensured the landed proprietors coming at length to see their interest in it—their continuance in such condition as to be safe.

Most folks know that to the monks we are indebted for those beautiful Gothic structures, our old cathedrals, like Westminster Abbey, and Canterbury and Winchester Cathedrals, but it may be new to some that many of the roads on which we walk and the bridges which we cross, may also owe something to them. The Roman Catholic Church did great work in the days when there was

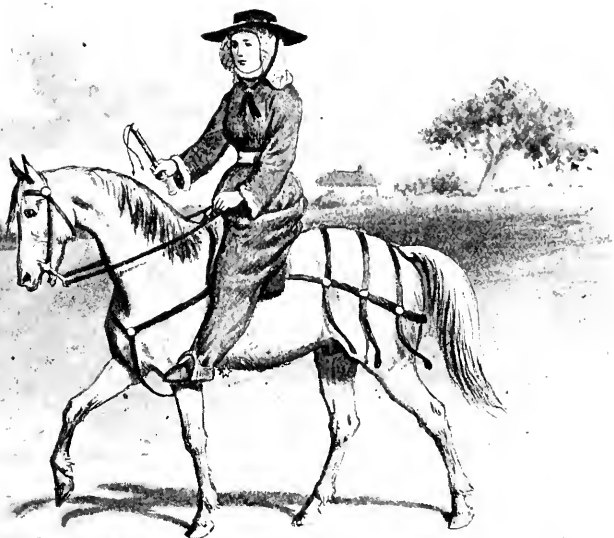


THREE-ARCHED BRIDGE CROWLAND

really no other force to mediate between the powerful and weak; it also did memorable things in the way of making people's fears and superstitions

about the future a means of promoting the comfort and well-being of coming generations on this earth. Pity that it fell into such abuse of its powers.

As we have said, wheeled carriages were rare



THE WIFE OF EATH.

and very cumbrous in those times. Many illustrations could be brought to show this. Many illustrations could be brought to prove also that, as on the Continent, in not a few places dogs were used for beasts of draught, so that they were harnessed in tandem to cars and so driven along the roads. As travelling on foot was very trying and hazardous, only the very poor ever dreamt of going any distance in this way; and ingenuity was applied to enable ladies to go journeys without the risks of riding on horseback. This resulted in the horse litter—a kind of closed vehicle with shafts at each end, which were slung on horses, the one before, the other behind. This litter was often adopted on State occasions, and the State horse-litter was a very elaborate affair, as the accompanying drawing will prove.

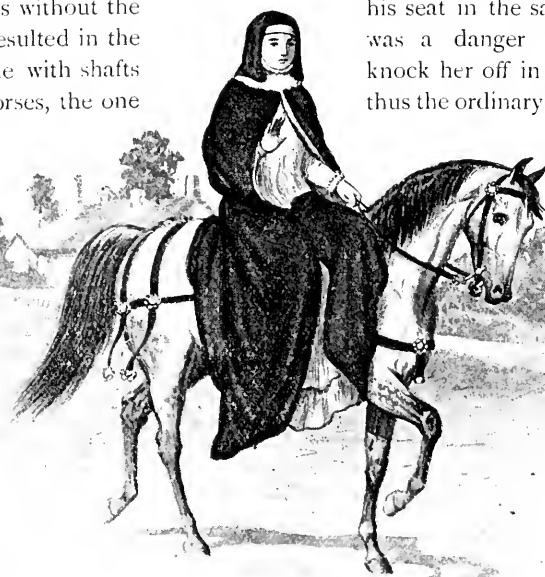
The horse was, therefore, of the utmost account in the middle ages, and it is evident that they had even then mastered some of the secrets of horse-breeding. There were coursers,

trotters, palfreys, hackneys, sumpters. To the knight his charger was essential—and not only this: for success he must understand his horse, as the horse must know and trust his master. The coursers were the horses of the knights; the trotter was the ordinary saddle-horse; the palfrey (named after the Roman *parafreda*, or “post-horse”) was the lady’s horse; the hackney was in use by common folks; and the sumpter was the pack-horse. It was deemed a disgrace for a knight to mount a mare—that was only fit for women, and

servants, and tradespeople.

One very common expedient to make a horse’s back a fit seat for two was the pillion. This was, as it were, a prolongation of the saddle, and on this a woman sat, with her face to the side of the horse. This, which was an early invention, under slightly improved forms, was much in use till past the period of the Commonwealth. The woman had to mount after her cavalier had taken

his seat in the saddle, else there was a danger that he would knock her off in his ascent; and thus the ordinary rules of courtesy



THE NONNE-PRIORISS.

were reversed, for, instead of lifting the lady on her seat, it may sometimes have happened that the lady had to help the gentleman. In order to sit securely, it was needful that the lady should clasp her companion round the waist, more especially if the roads were rough : so that the pillion was more fitted for amity than quarrelling or even for argument.

Considerable notions of rank or position, too, were indicated by the colour of the steed ridden. Our ancestors seem to have carried social distinctions into everything—dress, as well as other things. Lyard denoted a grey horse : Bayard, a bay : Favel, a chestnut : Morel, or mulberry colour, a dark roan. Favel was the colour for the servant or hanger-on of a great lord or bishop. We have corrupted “favel” into “favour,” and got a really meaningless phrase by the change. “To curry

Favel,” was to be following a patron in hope of benefits. Hence the old proverb thus set forth in rhyme :

“He that will in Court dwell,  
Must curry Favelle ;  
And he that will in Court abide,  
Must curry Favelle, back and side.”

Not only did the travelling party need to be protected against thieves and wild beasts, but against beggars also. There were, as yet, no definite laws respecting them, or ways of dealing with them ; and under all manner of pretences men became beggars, and crowded at certain points where there was any life or activity—at church porches and bridges particularly, but at

fairs also. Many of them were cunning knaves some were desperadoes, ever ready to seize any chance of obtaining what would enable them to live for a while longer in idleness. The monasteries were often, in later days, blamed for encouraging these beggars by too kindly harbouring them in their guest-houses, for your beggar can easily be the hypocrite for the nonce, as even in these days we know from daily experience.

It was an understood thing that, in a party, each traveller should do his best to lighten the way by telling stories or singing. Laymen generally sang ballads, we are told, and the monks and clergy

sang Psalms.

But this was not invariably : sometimes a priest or a monk would indulge in something humorous or secular, which no doubt his hearers quite as much relished. All these things, which Chaucer has presented to us with so much real-



PAIR ON HORSEBACK.

ism and art, were true to the actual facts of pilgrimage, and the mixture of classes and characters secured variety. It also secured great tolerance of certain things that now-a-days would be deemed coarse, if not unallowable.

For reasons of safety, originally, though it was later overlaid with ideas of display and magnificence, the lords, the bishops, and others who had wealth, had great trains attendant, much beyond what could possibly have been demanded by necessity. The bishop's retinue in travelling was in itself a pilgrimage. Here is Mr. Jusserand's account of the way in which Richard de Swinfield, Bishop of Hereford, invariably travelled. “He had constantly in his pay about forty persons of different

ranks, the greater part of whom accompanied the master in his numerous changes of residence. His squires (armigeri) had from a mark ( $1\frac{3}{4}$ ) to a pound a year; his *valetti*, that is, clerks of his chapel and others, his carters, porters, falconers, grooms, messengers, etc., had from a crown to eight shillings and eightpence. In the third degree came the kitchen servants, the baker, with two or four shillings a year; in the fourth degree, the boys or pages who helped the other servants and received from one to six shillings a year."

One thing is to be noted—the difference in the value of money; but its purchasing power was greater. Ordinary commodities were very cheap. And another point is, that, despite many tokens of hard service and poverty, magnifi-

cence and luxury, and imposing spectacle, were much in demand, and the more, perhaps, that the people were so ignorant, and that the church knew well how to show the way in this matter, the

bishop knowing how, on occasion, to outshine the baron.

And then there were the fairs. They owed their origin to the clergy and the monks also. In Professor Henry Morley's interesting "Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair," he tells the story of how Rahere, or Rayer, a man of humble origin, who

had been jester to Henry the First, founded a Priory in honour of St. Bartholomew, having got a grant of ground on which to build it from his erewhile master. Around that priory, which was built on a portion of Smithfield (or Smoothfield), the fairwasheld. And this is, in little, an account of how the fairs of the middle ages began and grew. As the Professor says, "The first fairs were formed by the gathering of worshippers and pilgrims a-

bout sacred places and especially within and about the walls of abbeys and cathedrals on the feast-days of the Saints enshrined in them." Some derive the very name Fair from the church

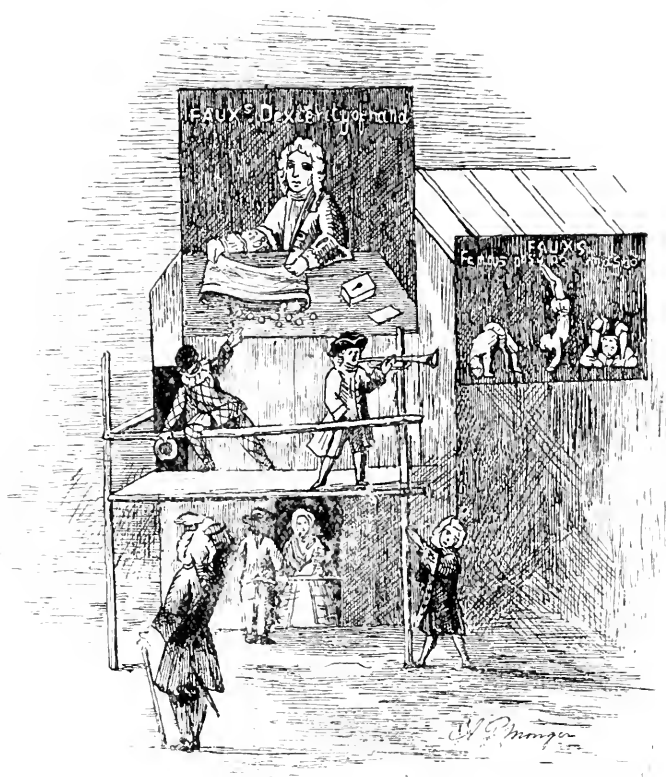
tenoit en son guon. J. cheuallier naure de gmir  
desiures plaies qui auoit ou corps et en l'atelle  
et eutour l'alutiere cheuauchoient. m. elaners  
deux dime part. et deux daultre. De n. ynam.



et la damouille faisoit moult grant  
dueil pour le cheuallier dont elle es  
it moult angouilleuse. car cestoit la  
iens ou monde quelle plus amoit  
et melle gnam la damouille si  
tost comme il vint pres de li. et celle respondi q  
dieux le beneue. ne pour ce ne lassa mie son dueil.

festivals under the name of *Feriae*. The Germans hold to this idea of origin, calling it *Messe* or *Mass*; in some regions it is indeed the *Kermesse* or *Church Mass*. The fairs brought people from far and near: it was the centre to which, at special times, the people travelled. And a motley concourse they must have been as they moved towards it. When the time came, all ordinary shops—such as they were—were closed, and purchasers for any sort of wares must go to the fair. There they found accompaniments of much else, and doubtless to their taste. The clown in “*The Winter’s Tale*” says of the pedlar: “He haunts wakes, fairs, and bear-baiting; exhibits ribbons of all the colours i’ the rainbow; points more than all the lawyers in Bohemia can learnedly handle, though they come to him by the gross: inkles, caddisses, cambricks, lawns. Why, he sings them over, as they were gods; or goddesses. You would think a smock were a she-angel; he also chants to the sleeve hand, and the work about the square on’t.” Mummers, jugglers, jongleurs, (still preserving some smack of their original business), tumblers, beggars, peasants, priests, friars, and monks with

shaven crowns, all in their several ways had travelled there; quacks, with their nostrums, conjurers, with their cups and balls; schoolboys and students, men and maids, and the players never to be forgotten, with their moralities and miracle plays, in which his Satanic majesty always played his part—as the sense of the time was then; so that earth and heaven, and “blasts from hell,” were represented, to image life as they then conceived it with all its possibilities, the paradise above, the green earth, and the black sulphurous under-world not forgotten, to temper, if it might be, the more careless thought, and make the present but a commentary and reminder of the future. So the Church tried to lay its hold upon every phase of life, and to work all things to its own ends, ever careful of its supremacy. To travel to a saint’s shrine was thus generally also to be present at a fair; and both the travelling and the saint’s shrine and fair—which was the end of it—were much beset with motley and what naturally comes along with it. Motley and religion, with chivalry to temper both, is the spirit of the middle ages, more especially as seen in its travelling.



FOOTH AT A MEI LIVAL FAIR.



## SOME EXPERIENCES OF A DÉBUTANTE.

BY A SINGER.

FEW amongst the audiences gathered in our great concert halls realise the feelings of anguish with which some shrinking débutante makes her first appearance before them; nor yet that the singing which is often coldly criticised as “mechanical—expressionless,” represents the concentration of all the force and will of one human soul! The mere “getting through” at all, is a triumph of nerve and effort. The more sensitive and gifted an artiste is, the more does she tremble and quail before the anticipation of facing the public—in its units so kindly—collectively, alas! often thoughtlessly severe. I have known a singer to reflect with a sense of relief, that she might not live to fulfil some dreaded yet coveted engagement.

For some weeks before the momentous occasion of a first appearance, a horrible nervousness and mistrust of her powers assails the novice, while a sleepless night usually precedes, and unfits the singer for the great trial of her powers.

On the other hand, a first acquaintance with the artist's room is rather an amusing experience; and, as such, affords some relief from the stress of personal hopes and fears. Upon the day of my own

*début* I entered the “green room,” filled with a respect that bordered upon awe for the eminent singers who were taking part in the concert, only to find these celebrities, with scarcely an exception, engrossed in bemoaning their physical condition. Each lamented his or her particular trouble, and no one paid the slightest attention to anyone else. “I have a bad sore throat,” said the operatic baritone—a handsome stalwart fellow—“the doctor says I ought to rest; but what can one do, with any number of engagements undertaken?”

“Oh! my *throat* is all right,” remarked the tenor, “but I am absolutely worn out with work, flying from one part of the country to another. I never get a comfortable meal—and late hours play the mischief with one's voice!”

These, and many similar complaints, were heard on all sides. The scene might have been the ante-chamber of some great doctor's consulting-room—all the patients incurable and hopelessly selfish. In one corner stood a once charming singer, now somewhat *passée*, but held in great esteem as a teacher, extolling alternately the voices of her pupils, and the precocities of her children. In



another corner a pretty girl, obviously ill at ease, was bursting into the trills and roulades adorning her song. Presently it became apparent that she had cause for her trepidation, for the conductor, coming to lead her on to the platform, enquired in an angry voice why she had not attended rehearsal. She attempted an explanation—"her sister's marriage, etc." But this was speedily cut short. "I do not want to know anything about your sister's marriage. You ought to have come to rehearsal! Your song will go very badly, very badly!" And with these words, wrathfully uttered, he led her forward—to sing with feelings better imagined than described.

The same *entrepreneur* is one of the gentlest and most encouraging of patrons to those whom he considers to be hard-working and deserving artists. Insensible to flattery, and superior to interested motives, he gives a fair hearing to young beginners, and advances their interests proportionately to their merit. His commendation is sparingly given and highly prized, for he has brought forward many of the most eminent performers of our day—instrumentalists and vocalists alike. To the diffident he is ever kindly: cheering the timid novice by some pleasant jest, as he leads her forward to the arena of her first success or failure.

Artistes are much more generous to one another than the general public imagine. Of course before his or her own performance, each one of the company is self-centred! But, the trial over, they awaken to the fact that others are suffering the same pangs, sharing the same anxieties, with interests as deeply involved in the results of their appearance. Very cordial and kindly is the applause accorded by the great *virtuosi* to the youthful enthusiast who has done well; and this praise is warmly appreciated, for it is never insincere. An ominous silence follows failure.

It is important that a *début* should be made at a high-class concert. Such, for example, as the Crystal Palace Concerts, the ballad concerts at St. James' Hall, or the Monday Popular Concerts. This at once gives a performer a certain standing, and is helpful to further success, though only to a limited extent. Even after coming out successfully at a good concert, much remains to be done, and a singer must exert herself with wisely directed perseverance if she wishes to follow up her initial effort.

Some of our most accomplished singers have gone through years of struggle, during which time they could only get second-rate engagements in the suburbs or provinces, before any great opportunity presented itself. A lady who has long been one of the brightest ornaments of our operatic stage, made her early successes in a Music Hall! She has been fortunate indeed, in advancing thence to her present position. As a rule such a beginning does not lead on to fame or fortune.

It is sometimes asked if a *débutante* has ever been so unnerved as to be unable to produce her voice. This has happened: but the commonest result of nervousness is a cold and mechanical performance, even though the singer be exceptionally endowed with dramatic force. In my own case, I felt sure that I should begin to sing in a wrong key, and I therefore asked the accompanist to play the first few notes of my solo with the accompaniment! He, being a really experienced musician, as well as a kindly man, and well aware of the many forms in which diffidence betrays itself, good naturedly consented. An accompanist new to his work would have assumed that I was grossly ignorant and musically incapable. This is only one instance of the advantage enjoyed in playing or singing before the cultured musician of wide sympathies. If a difficult task be well performed, he credits you with the full merit of what you have accomplished, while, if you fail to do justice to your subject, his knowledge of the world and of human nature often leads him to a correct estimate of the causes (possibly physical and transient) of your temporary failure—and also to a belief in your ability to do better under more favourable conditions. One of our most gifted singers took a leading part recently in a performance of the "Messiah," given in a provincial town. She was obviously suffering from cold and hoarseness. Any one at all acquainted with the voice would have detected this. Yet an incompetent critic called her *passée*, although she is still in the first bloom of womanhood, and likely to surpass her early achievements in future triumphs. Happily, later in the season, she returned to the town in question, and sang with great grace and sweetness, charming all who heard her.

I imagine that many beginners are inspired to do their utmost, and saved from breaking down on



their first appearance, by the thought of their teacher. In my own case I realised what a wrong I should do my kind and painstaking mistress if I made a *fiasco* when honoured by an announcement as her pupil. Of recent years, since I myself have become a teacher, my own pupils have told me that the thought of my interest in their success has enabled them to forget self and sing well.

The effects of nervousness are varied and amusing. One young mezzo-soprano was prevented just in time from walking on to the platform in a huge pair of fur-lined over-shoes, which were put on above her slippers, and which contrasted comically with her dainty gown. Another songstress, who was gifted with a good verbal memory, was singing without note. During a rather elaborate symphony, preceding the second verse of her song, she chanced idly to glance at the book of words which she was holding. Confusion followed. She could not link the melody with the poem. It was a terrible moment; but she stepped swiftly to the piano, glanced at the accompanist's copy, and finished her song *con amore*! It appeared, on inspection, that by a printer's error two lines of her song had been left out of the book of words. This had confused her, and was the cause of her failure to blend words and music together.

After making a successful *début*, the next step is to obtain a second hearing. The inexperienced may imagine that to do this one has only to go to an agent. But not so! Agents will have nothing to do with anyone who is unknown, and whose eventual popularity is problematical. "We have no vacancies on our lists." Or, perhaps some less eminent *entrepreneur* may condescend to take your fee, and enter your name in his books; but little actual result will follow until you make some signal success. Then your day will come, and agents will offer to transact your business.

But after all, in this, as in every vocation, the competent are sure of ultimate recognition. Only, with regard to singing, physical conditions play so very important a part, that ill-health is often the reason why we hear no more of some sweet songstress who once charmed all listeners, and who appeared likely to make a great and lasting reputation.

Also, at the present day, increased facilities for study have brought forward a crowd of half-trained singers of average ability and very ordinary vocal endowments. Thus it is obvious that many must fail where the few succeed. There is always room for the best.

Unless a singer has connections possessed of influence in the musical world, she will have to nerve herself to many trying interviews with managers and agents. The most contradictory opinions as to her merits will be freely expressed. One man will tell her that her voice is good, very sweet, but that she lacks expression, and has no style. Then he suggests that she should go to some teacher of his recommendation, from whom, if she consents, he will probably receive a fee. Perhaps on the same day she is told by another agent that her voice is common-place, and, if she ventures to remark that it seldom fails to please an audience, her critic adds that her general intelligence enables her to use the defective organ with skill, but that it takes both voice and talent to make an artiste! An agent of my acquaintance promised great furtherance to a young vocalist if she would place herself under a teacher of his selection, and he criticised most severely the method of the professor under whose care she was then studying. This girl was loyal to her mistress, and when in due time she made a successful *début*, was told by a distinguished conductor that she could not do better than continue under the same instruction!

A concert tour is often one of the first experiences of a vocalist; possibly not a grand tour in the company of celebrated artistes, where every detail is arranged with a view to the comfort of each member of the party, but one more circumscribed in its area, and composed of lesser luminaries, who may yet be excellent in their degrees. Such a tour formed one of my early engagements, and some account of it may not be out of place here.

We started from an important provincial town in the north country. Our party was made up of four singers: a pianist, who also accompanied the songs; a violinist and our business manager. The violinist was a young girl of great talent, who has since taken a good position in the metropolis; the pianist was a leading organist and teacher of piano in

our northern city: the tenor, a very sweet singer of considerable local reputation; our bass, who has now swelled the ranks of the profession, had a magnificent voice: our contralto was an amateur, but a thorough musician, while the soprano was a young singer, who had been trained by an eminent professor, and who had during the two or three years following her *début*, shown promise of a successful career. Ill-health had forced her to relinquish a calling so taxing to the physical energies, and she had quitted London to settle in the provinces as a teacher.

We had to make an early start in order to travel by the express, which, however, no one would have suspected of being a fast train, unless specially enlightened! It was a stormy morning, rain falling in torrents, and all the party were somewhat depressed. Our pianist was sure there would be a poor house on such a wet day: our contralto felt in bad form; our tenor was bilious, and so on. The soprano, who had scarcely recovered from her recent illness, was overheard confiding to the contralto that she had brought some biscuits and a bottle of excellent claret with her, as she was apprehensive, from past experience, of delays and shortcomings in the commissariat department.

On arriving at K—, the town where we began this series of concerts, the tenor, who was beginning to recover from his bilious attack, gallantly insisted upon carrying our soprano's travelling-bag to the carriage which was to convey us to our rooms. He was unfortunately ignorant of its contents and let it fall, so that when opened by its owner she beheld a wreck of broken glass and a flood of claret, wherein reposed a travelling clock, "Thomas à Kempis," and a valued purse belonging to a friend who had lent it to the Songstress while her own was under repair, with the remark, "There are very few people to whom I would lend that purse." In the purse were two bank notes, both saturated with the crimson liquid. Our tenor was penitent, and painstakingly dried the notes by the fire, presently departing on a shopping expedition, whence he returned bearing another bottle of claret, of which we all partook at dinner.

Shortly before the hour at which the concert was to begin, our agent rushed in to say that only four tickets were sold, and he was going to give away as many as possible, so that we should not

have to sing and play to empty benches. As our company was a sort of joint-stock affair—equal loss, equal profit—this further depressed our spirits.

Monday at K— was wet and cold. Tuesday, on which day we appeared at M—, was wet and warm. Fortunately we were cheered by a good house and a highly appreciated audience, and, as we more than met our expenses, having a trifle over towards the K— deficit, we began to feel cheerful.

At B— the weather was chilly but dry, although the roads were miry after the rain. The hotel, too, was new and cold, being pervaded by the raw smell of damp plaster. There were compensations, however, in the form of an excellent dinner, and the cheering announcement from our man of business that the tickets were selling almost faster than they could dispense them: further, that numbers of people were coming in from the adjacent country seats. "Our fame has preceded us," we exclaimed—and we began to be merry. Unfortunately our soprano was developing a cold, which made her voice nasal, so our funny man suggested that to make up for this she should go on with an airy skip and a bound, to sing "I'm a Merry Zingara," in character; whereupon he gave the whole scene in pantomime.

The audience was aristocratic and enthusiastic—unusual combination—but not so large as we had fondly hoped. The "sixpenny people" did not patronise us. We heard afterwards that they thought us too "high toned!"

On the following morning we returned to the town which we had made our headquarters, as most of us had professional engagements to fulfil there before completing our tour. By this time our poor soprano was really ill: but she struggled through her work until the day came for the next concert of the series. The contralto and soprano were to drive to the station together; but, very late, the cab was driven up to the soprano's house, and the charioteer announced that he had failed to discover the contralto's abode! So the invalid departed alone, to find at the rendezvous that more of our number were missing, to all of whom urgent telegrams were sent *en route*. The violinist, pianist and accompanist, with the contralto and bass, arrived only just in time to dress very hastily and hurry down to the hall. The contralto had waited patiently for the cab that

never came, while the others had made some mistake about the train. Meanwhile, our soprano was not without her sorrows. As she had been engaged in teaching in the early morning, a guest had kindly offered to pack her evening dress and other requisites, which welcome help had been thankfully accepted, with a reminder as to sundry trifles likely to be over-looked. The hour of the concert was approaching, and the invalid was enjoying a short period of rest before a glowing fire in the drawing-room of some friends, with whom she had been staying, when her hostess appeared with rather a dismayed expression on her kindly face—"I went up to unpack your box—for you do look so dreadfully ill—and I can't find any evening dress." Investigation proved this sad announcement to be only too true—and our soprano astonished us by appearing in a matronly gown of black velvet, very full in the skirt, and rather short. But we all shared her thankfulness that this calamity had found her in the house of friends, from whom she could borrow a dress tolerably suitable to the occasion. This incident recalls the experience of another young artiste, on tour in Devonshire and Cornwall, who was snowed up on the way to her destination, which she reached, without her luggage, after the hour at which the concert was announced to commence. She had no friends in the town to help her out of her difficulty, and so sang in her travelling-dress.

At A——, the capital of a thriving agricultural district, we experienced another hindrance in the form of a heavy snowstorm. This in October! There had been the promise of a crowded house, but the roads were too deeply blocked to allow of a good attendance from the surrounding country.

On the following day we departed for F——, in torrents of rain, and on arriving, found ourselves located in a very primitive inn, where the sitting room was adorned with large framed and glazed advertisements of celebrated ales and whiskies. At this concert there was a full attendance, and the "sixpenny people" turned out in force, including two over-festive fishermen who made audible running comments through

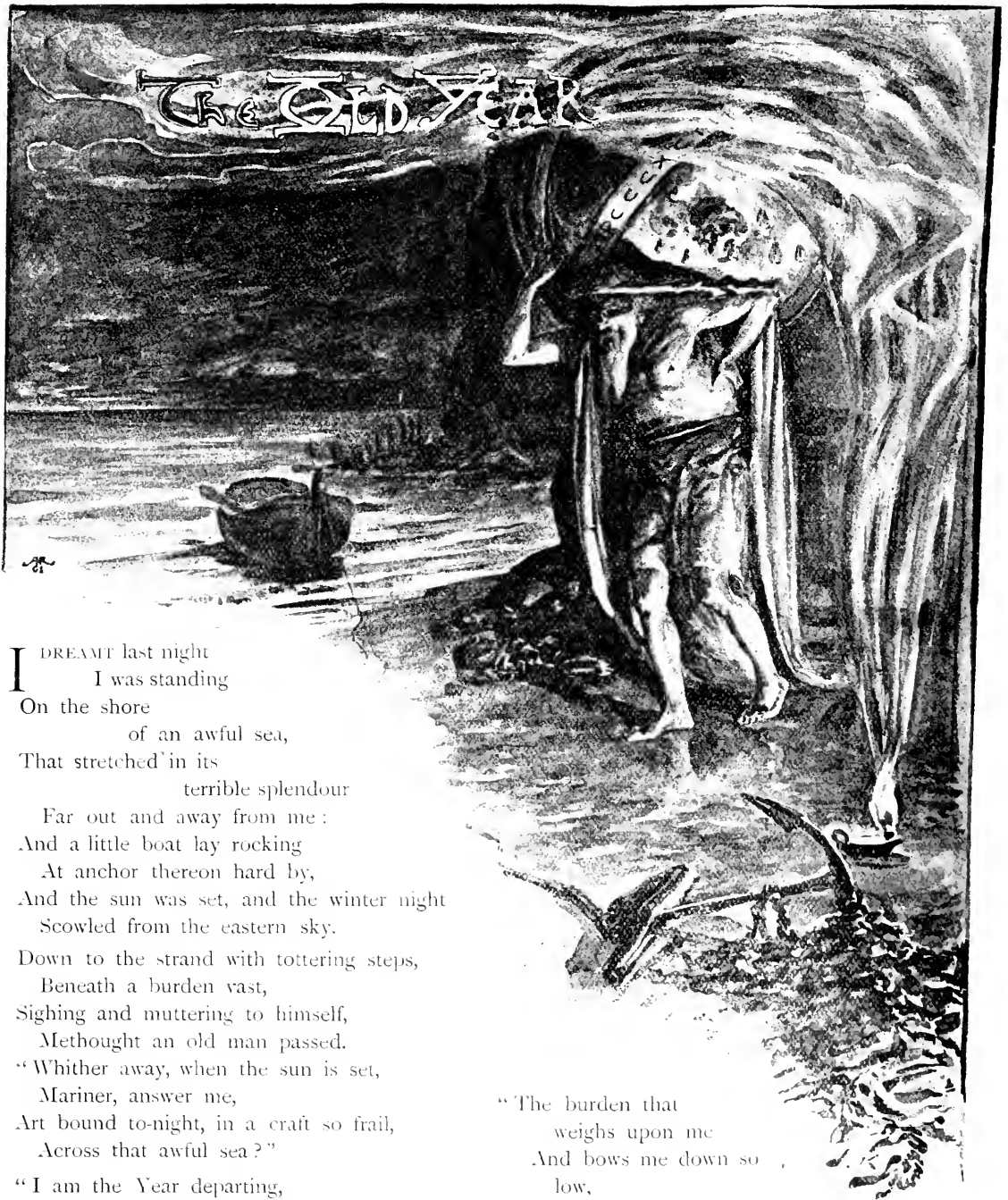
every solo, and joined in all the Scotch songs until they were forcibly ejected.

Next morning our soprano was too ill to travel. Fortunately our sixth and last concert had been postponed for a day or two; but on that occasion we again had all the elements against us, and consequently a small audience!

This history of a musical venture will give some idea of the difficulties and hindrances besetting every undertaking of the kind. Two, at least, of our party were highly trained, and possessed of a reputation not merely local. Some of us were already known and popular in three of the towns we visited; but in each case the towns were small, and all audiences were largely drawn from the country round. Thus the weather was greatly contributive to our success or failure.

Of the other members of our party three have since made great progress in the art for which they have now been trained, and they are likely to do well.

As my readers will have learned, there is much variety in the life of an artiste. On the whole the pleasant element predominates; while disagreeables often partake so largely of the ludicrous as to lose half their power to wound. Yet I should advise anyone who thinks of making singing a profession to weigh well the advantages and drawbacks; to be assured in the first place that her voice is really good, and her physical powers exceptionally vigorous, and also to realise that much patient, steady work must be given to attain the desired end, and to be prepared for long waiting in the day of small things, before she reaps the fruit of faithful labour. For one artiste who attains prosperity at a single bound, there are many, equally meritorious, who only fight their way to popularity step by step. And this, after all, is perhaps at once the best discipline and the surest foundation for enduring reputation. In conclusion, let me ask of all who make this art their study, and whose efforts win success, to remember, in the day of their prosperity, their own early struggles, and extend a kindly helping hand to the young who are entering upon the same difficulties and trials which beset their own youth.



I DREAMT last night  
I was standing  
On the shore  
of an awful sea,  
That stretched in its  
terrible splendour  
Far out and away from me :  
And a little boat lay rocking  
At anchor thereon hard by,  
And the sun was set, and the winter night  
Scowled from the eastern sky.  
Down to the strand with tottering steps,  
Beneath a burden vast,  
Sighing and muttering to himself,  
Methought an old man passed.  
“Whither away, when the sun is set,  
Mariner, answer me,  
Art bound to-night, in a craft so frail,  
Across that awful sea?”  
“I am the Year departing,  
I dare not pause or stay :  
I must launch me on yonder ocean,  
And voyage far away.”  
“Say, what is the heavy burden  
Thou bearest with such pains?  
Carriest thou hence to another world  
A twelvemonth’s golden gains?”

“The burden that  
weighs upon me  
And bows me down so  
low,  
Is the burden of hours and  
minutes  
That reckless men let go—  
The burden of fair occasions  
By millions never seized,  
When wrongs were to be righted,  
And aching bosoms eased ;

The burden of gentle speeches  
 Lips should have spoken here,  
 That together with kindlier actions  
 Had made some lives less drear,  
 The burden of all the gladness  
 That in this world might be,  
 Had men but thought of the Giver more,  
 Who took God's gifts from me!"

"Alas! in that heavy burden  
 What sins thou hast of mine!  
 Oh, mariner, give them back to me,  
 For bitterly I repine,  
 Thinking of fair occasions  
 And days and moments sped,  
 And the work for God I might have done  
 If I their rede had read!"

Sadly, methought, I turned me  
 From the shore of that awful sea,  
 And I knew that its terrible splendour  
 Was that of Eternity;  
 And my heart was troubled within me  
 And heavy with many fears,  
 And lo! it was New Year's morning,  
 And I awoke in tears!

"Too late! too late!" was the solemn voice,  
 That answered from the shore.  
 "The Past is past, but the years to come,  
 See that thou waste no more!  
 And now—for I hear the summons  
 That brooks no fresh delay—  
 A long farewell and a sad farewell  
 To earth and thee I say!"

Weeping, bitterly weeping,  
 Into the boat he stept,  
 And rowed out into the darkness  
 That over the waters swept,  
 Bearing his burden with him,  
 That burden strange and vast,  
 And weeping, bitterly weeping,  
 Beyond my vision passed.

J. H. DAVIES.



## AN AFTER-DINNER TALK IN THE 'SIXTIES.

BY MRS. BROTHERTON.

IT was only an after-dinner talk round the fire in the drawing-room of my little Kensington house.

The time was in the 'sixties, a year or two after the great storm of civil war in America had thundered itself into peace.

My wife and I had not long returned from a honeymoon tour in the re-United States, and I meant to write a book on the social aspects there. Kind friends, in your orisons be all my sins remembered, but remember also the uncommitted one of that superfluous book. There is a certain locality, the road to which is said to be paved with our good intentions—would it be wrong to suggest that our bad intentions, repented and renounced, may help the pattern of a tessellated pavement elsewhere?

We were six in company: four Americans, my wife, and I. Other guests had departed to fulfil other engagements; those who remained had brought an introduction from friends across the big water.

One was a Southerner, a Virginian, named Marney, a tall, handsome, fair man, of five-and-forty. He had a good deal of that precise politeness which we call "old school," which now-a-days, and here, seems even to have a touch of the histrionic, but which is, or was, the ordinary manner of many well-bred Americans. Colonel Marney was in France, with his French wife, when the civil war broke out, but he went home at once and fought with the Confederates all through their fighting to its bitter end. He had now returned to Europe, and, having no longer any American property, or any near American relations, was about to settle in France among his wife's kindred.

Another of our guests was a young Northern general of eight-and-twenty, who had been in fourteen pitched battles as big as Waterloo. I have no special reason, however, to remember him otherwise than as almost boyish in appearance: a simple, modest, young fellow, who had left his father's homestead to join the army, and was going back to the farm, now that he had enjoyed his well-earned playtime in Europe.

The only woman present besides my wife was Zorah Clayton, the wife of a rich New Yorker, herself a Marylander by birth and race. We knew of her that she had left the South as an orphan of thirteen, and her instincts and sympathies might well have become Northern, long before those of North and South clashed so stormily. She could hardly have any association with Maryland except fading dreams of its beauty and sunshine, blurred by gathering clouds of early adversity; and dim recollections of ruined and broken-hearted parents. She was now a charming, soft-eyed, soft-voiced woman of thirty, richly clothed, as American women love to be, with a delicate colourless skin of so exquisite a texture that she made one think of all white and rare flowers.

Her husband was a quiet, silent man to whom she seemed devotedly attached.

The conversation was very general, and at first impersonal. Not that there was any danger of disagreeable antagonism cropping up between North and South, as represented among us.

It has often seemed to me characteristic of the generous youth of the American people that they were, speaking from personal experience, as ready to fraternise again, their awful quarrel once over, as schoolboys after a fair fight, with no remnant of animosity or even uncomfortable embarrassment, and with a genuine and abiding respect for each other's pluck and staying power.

I doubt if German and French, even now, could meet and chat together so entirely without *arrière-pensée*, and with such unaffected good temper as re-United States men did immediately after their re-union.

Our conversation drifted presently into that favourite subject—female beauty of different nationalities, and races, and types: each man's particular ideal, the nearest approach to it he had ever beheld, and so forth. It is a talk topic almost sure to come on the carpet among travelled folks.

I forget what everybody else said about it on this occasion, because of my vivid recollection of the Virginian Colonel's contribution to the discussion, in which at first he had taken no part.

"I think," said he, speaking in that low deliberate voice of the American gentleman, which has something carefully soft in it, like a voice in a sick-room, "I think the most beautiful woman I ever saw in my life was a daughter of my own."

Everyone looked at him, and he went on: "She was only seventeen years of age, but her beauty was already perfect. My wife had taken a great fancy to the child when it was two or three years old, and before she had any living children of her own. She called it Lucille, after an infant she had lost; she carried it to France with her on one of her visits to her kindred; and she left the little Lucille to be educated there. When she returned to us she was sixteen, already a wonder of beauty and grace and accomplishments. That was just a year before the War broke out."

My wife, who was greatly interested, said innocently, "And is your beautiful daughter in France now, with her step-mother?"

"No, Madam," said the Colonel, without correcting her mistake, "none of our household accompanied us to Europe when we came over just before the War."

My wife, who was very young, and English, and a country parson's daughter, was the only person present who misunderstood him.

"And of what type was this young beauty?" asked Zorah Clayton: "Was she dark-skinned?"

"No, Madam," answered the Colonel, "she was as fair as a lily. . . . As fair as yourself," politely. "Her mother was nearly white. Her eyes and brows were dark, but her magnificent hair was auburn."

The truth had dawned on my wife; dawned in a bright blush; but the Marylander asked abruptly, her pretty tinkling soprano sharpened, "What has become of her?"

"I cannot tell you," said the Colonel gently, but for the first time with a slight American accent, betraying something like emotion. "When the troubles came I had to . . . realise."

"My God!" cried Zorah Clayton.

There was a dead silence. Then Zorah Clayton cried out again, her voice quick and high:

"My God! . . . but you *know* what has become of her. You must know."

"Madam," said the Colonel, very quietly, "I could never find the least traces of her. I instructed my agent to turn my Virginian property

into money, and he obeyed my instructions, and transmitted the proceeds to France, while I was on my voyage back to join the Confederate forces. He, too, joined our army, and was killed early in the War. We never met again."

"But you knew, you *knew*," persisted Zorah; "you must have known! Oh, the poor, beautiful child! To think of it! To think of it! . . . Oh, *your agent should have shot her!*"

And she burst out crying. Her husband and my wife went to her, and soothed her, and she quickly wiped away her tears.

"Perhaps," suggested my wife softly, "some good man married her: she was so beautiful and charming."

At this the Southern woman laughed hysterically. "Married! Dear, innocent lady! she was a *slave*! There was no more marriage for her than for your lap-dog."

Dead silence again. These silences were becoming intolerably loud. As for me, I was constrained, as the host, to neutrality; but as an Englishman I certainly regarded the daughter-selling Colonel as rather a disgraceful guest.

After-thought convinced me that I had judged him with great injustice, as we must all judge others, in ignorance of conditions impossible and unimaginable in our own lives.

I made a weak attempt to start another subject with the young Northern general, but unsuccessfully. Meanwhile, Mr. Clayton had said something in a low voice to his emotional wife, and she replied, smiling very sweetly:

"Oh yes; I was wrong, Jack; I was very wrong."

Then she turned to Colonel Marney with a faint colour in her face, and said, "I beg you to forgive me. I had no right to speak with so much freedom."

He bowed to her ceremoniously, but in silence, as one who accepts an apology that is his due; and then, addressing us all, as if courteously condescending to explain what nobody had any business to question:

"It was one of the many regrettable incidents of that unhappy time. I was hastening home to take my share in a desperate struggle in which I was as likely to fall as another. It was my simple duty to make all the provision in my power for my wife and children; and Southern property was

already lowered in value by the threatening aspect of public affairs. My first duty, beyond all other considerations whatever, was surely towards my wife and children. At least, I think so."

The strange contradiction in this speech: the deadened conscience manifest in all this conscientiousness: the denial of duty in the very assumption and assertion of it—were all so evidently beyond the speaker's own recognition and even suspicion, that one felt confounded and bewildered, as before a perfectly honest man, who had committed a crime in his sleep.

This was what was passing through my mind, when I received a touch on my arm, amounting to a pinch, and became aware that I was staring at the poor Colonel with rude intentness. My wife tells me I am subject to these fits of staring—"glaring," she calls it—and that when I "do it to her she feels exactly like a fly's wing under a microscope." (And yet she asserts that she has no imagination!).

When I had been thus painfully restored to propriety, I found that Mrs. Clayton was talking with much earnestness, and with a pretty musical volubility that I have observed in Southern American women when they want to get something out, and have done with it.

But though she began in that small tinkling voice of hers, I could not but observe how it gained force and richness as she went on.

"I should like to tell you," she was saying, "why I was moved to speak so indiscreetly just now. You must not mistake the cause of my excitement. I don't hate slavery out of love of the slave but of the slave-owners."

Here my wife cast a surprised and reproachful look at her.

"Yes, dear lady," said the Marylander, "I cannot sympathise with the negroes as if I were not a Southerner, of a slave-owning race: no Southerner can. I have felt most for the slave-owners because I knew that slavery at its worst could not make the negroes so miserable as it made their owners wicked. Yes, that is what slavery did to the Southerners: it utterly demoralised them. It killed conscience so far that right and wrong were words without meaning as regarded their relations with their slaves. So that even the best of them—and oh! there was many a gallant gentleman and good woman amongst them—did wicked things

devoid of pity and justice, without the least consciousness of their being wicked. The merciful man, that was merciful to his beast, was naturally merciful to his slave: it was a mere accident of disposition, and bound them to nothing."

Here I put in something feeble and trite to the effect that the slaves in the majority of Southern households had been happy, and devotedly attached to their owners.

On this the taciturn New York gentleman observed:

"I don't know as the contented, dog-like slave was not a more shocking sight than the mutinous one, if you looked at him in the light of a man." By which it was evident that Mr Clayton felt that sympathy with the negro which his wife had disclaimed, and which probably but a small portion of the Northerners had ever felt at heart.

"Well," Zorah Clayton continued, "if slavery demoralised the good and gentle-natured, what effect must it have had on the violent-tempered, and selfish, and tyrannical? In the beginning of this century my great-grandmother happened to be one of the worst-natured women that ever lived, but she could hardly have developed into the incarnate fiend she became without irresponsible power to help her. My people, the Trants, were fairly big folks in Maryland: and at that time all their property and all their negroes had come into the hands of that elderly lady, who had been born a Trant, and had married her cousin. The hideous things she continually did to her slaves I really believe she had come to do from sheer cussedness, as we say! Cruelty had become a craving, like the craving of a drunkard for brandy. What I am telling you was told to me by my mother, who was married to Madam Trant's grandson, and who died, broken-hearted, when I was thirteen years old, six months after my ruined father. One day my great-grandmother had a very old negress tied to a tree, and slowly roasted alive. If she had committed any fault, which I doubt, I never heard what it was. Madame Trant had a chair brought out, and seated herself opposite the shrieking wretch, whose nearest relations were ordered to stand in the crowd around their mistress. It is said that she laughed heartily at the horrible yells of her victim. . . . But just before the miserable old creature gave up the ghost she suddenly ceased to shriek for mercy, and



began in a loud voice to curse Madam Trant, and all the Trants, root and branch. She seemed to turn prophetess, and actually to *see* the disgrace, ruin, and violent death that she called down on them, and that should, she predicted, wipe out their name from the land. She prophesied that no Trant would possess a foot of earth there but their graves, and the last of them all would starve but for the charity of strangers. It all came true: the sorrow, and shame, and ruin, and death. I was the last of them all, an orphan child without a cent, and I should have starved but for the charity of strangers. . . . God bless them! . . . My Jack's parents, and my Jack."

There her voice failed, but her sweet colourless face had become all rosy with her warm Southern blood; her beautiful eyes were shining with tears and tenderness, as she laid her hand softly on her quiet husband's.

"Thank God for the conquered South!" she added, in the silence, then, abruptly turning on the startled Northern General, "And thank *you*," she cried, for helping to slay the dragon that was feeding on those noble souls."

I must own that the young dragon-slayer she thus complimented looked neither grateful nor gratified at the tribute to his valour. Indeed, he was visibly shocked at what seemed, no doubt, to his soldierly simplicity, a speech in execrably bad taste, considering the presence of a vanquished enemy.

Blushing furiously, he was heard to mutter something incoherent about the "splendid fighting of the Rebs.," and then he jumped up to go.

Mrs. Clayton laughed a little at his discomfiture, and more at herself, and what she frankly called her high falutin' talk. A few minutes after we were all standing up, shaking hands with one another, and our guests were on the point of departure, when that impulsive creature, finding herself close to the open piano, suddenly sat down and burst out singing, "My Maryland! my Maryland!" sang it so exquisitely, with such heart-breaking pathos, that we were all reduced to the verge of weeping.

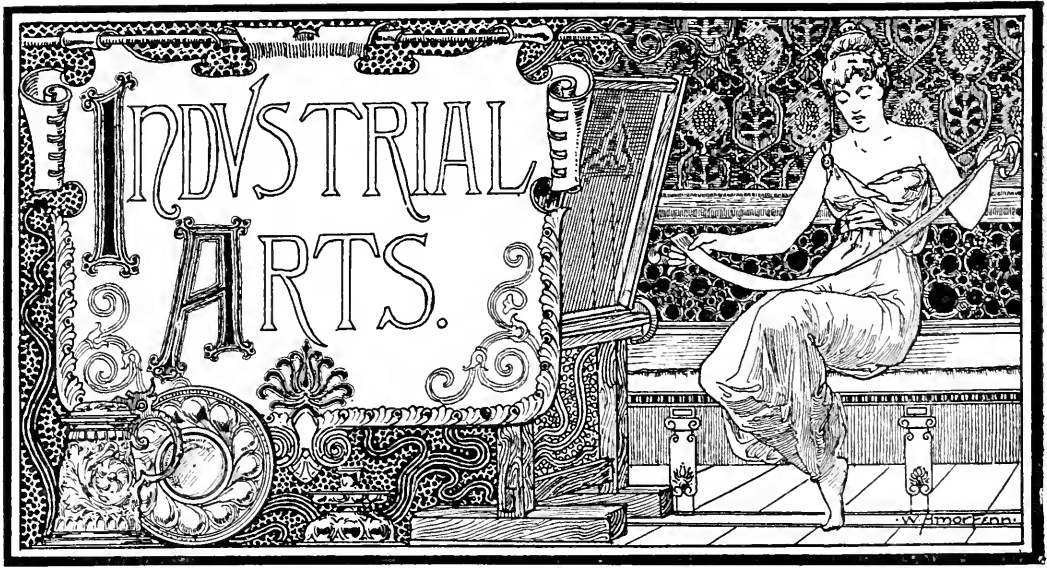
As for her, when she had ended, she sprang up, the tears streaming down her fair face, kissed my wife, made a swift graceful gesture with head and hand to the rest of us, and ran out of the room.

When we were alone, my wife and I, comparing notes, agreed that Zorah Clayton's hideous little family tragedy, with its crude colouring of superstition, and its exceptional horror, was, after all, a far less ghastly proof and example of what slavery had done to demoralise slave-owners than Colonel Marney's soberly-related commercial transaction: a transaction, it was evident, of no exceptional horror, indeed of no horror at all to the ex-slave-owner who related it as merely a "regrettable incident"!

Under what other possible conditions of civilised life could an honest man, and honourable gentleman, have come to believe it his "*simple duty to realise*" the value of the shame of his daughter—his beautiful, desirable, helpless child?

It was but an after-dinner talk in the 'sixties, but it had a strange *dénouement* in the 'eighties, that has yet to be written.





## II.

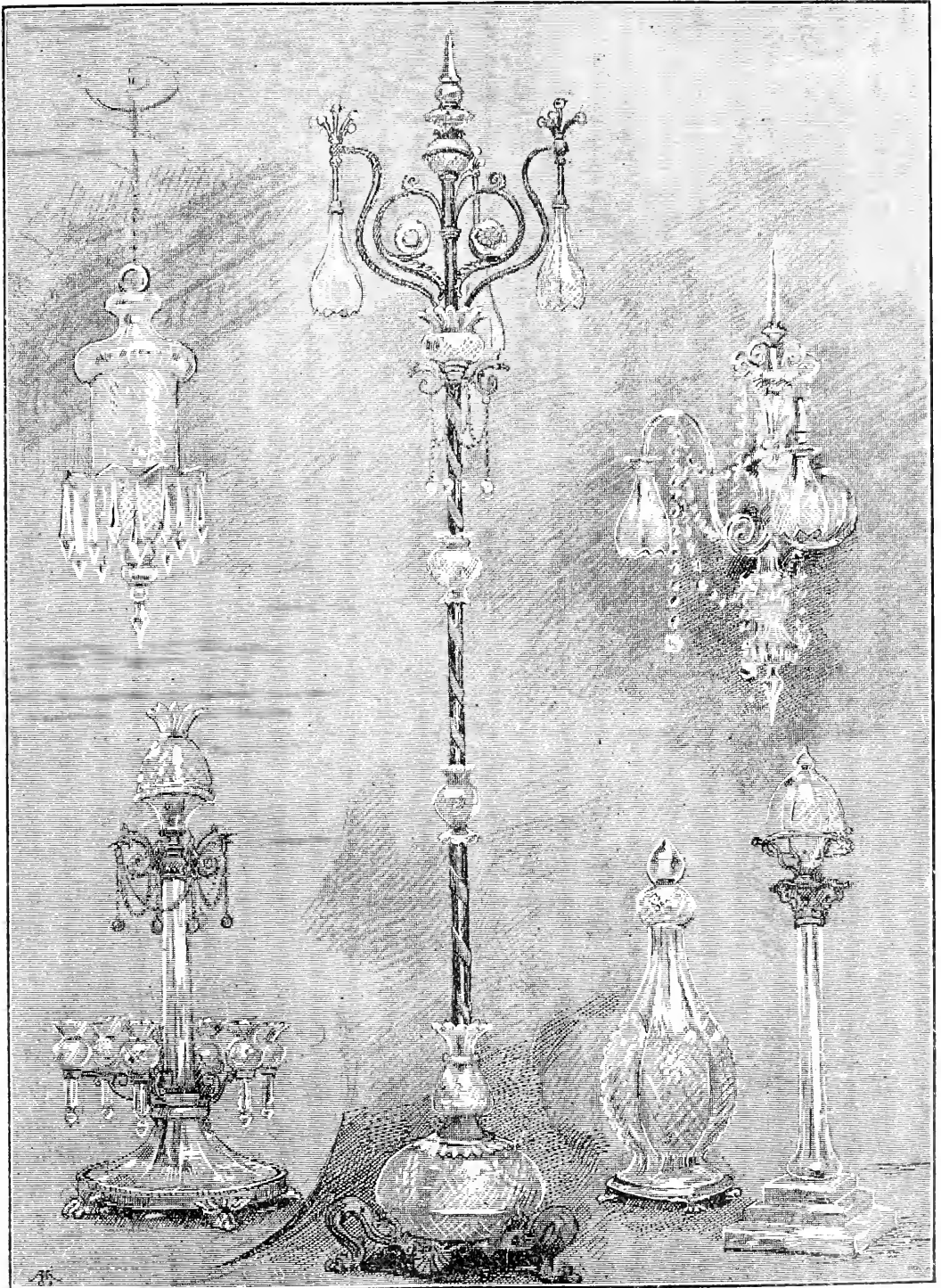
### GLASS-BLOWING.

BY KINETON PARKES.

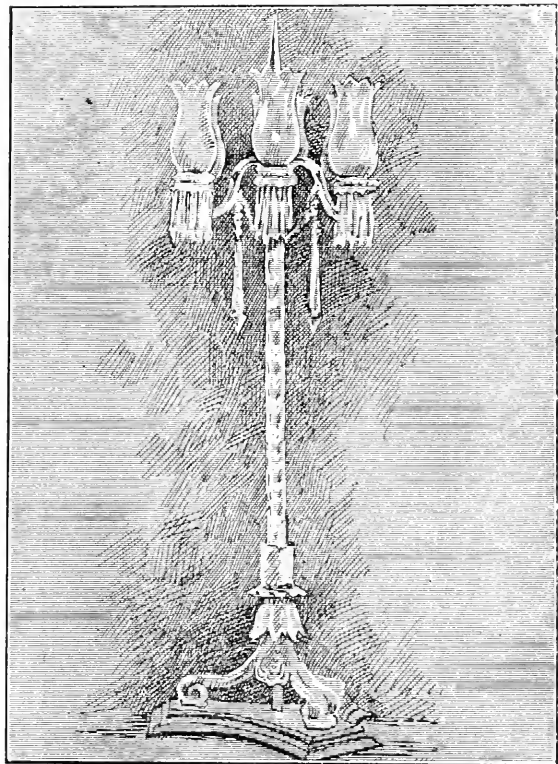
THE craft of glass-blowing is generally regarded as a lost one, and it must be confessed that it is by no means in its palmy days. Apparently this is mainly due to indifference to the art. What there is of artistic merit in glass manufacture to-day is mainly derived from the past history of the art—the most artistic pieces are imitations of ancient glass-ware, such as Venetian and Dutch. And yet it is an enormous industry, which includes all the branches of glass-making, and it is a matter of wonder that the level of the work is no higher than we find it. The demand is for clear, bright glass, cut with extreme care and polished to the last stage. The designs are singularly few, and they are not new; and, moreover, the attempt to introduce new ones is a half-hearted one, and even when made is received in a most conservative spirit. I am willing to admit that there is a charm in even the most ordinary cut table glass, but it is a chilling charm, and there is nothing about it to attract one's attention but its flawlessness. Yet here is an opportunity for the display of not only beautiful form, but beautiful colour as well, for there is leisure to take in its beauty, and the beauty is easily procurable if demanded.

I am inclined to think that there is more good, unconscious design spoilt in the process of glass-manufacture than in any other manufacture with which I am acquainted. This point indicates most forcibly the desirability, nay, the necessity, of educating the glass-blower, so that he may know what beauty of form is, and what, good design. I have often watched the making of an ordinary tumbler, wine-glass, or bottle. At one moment in the manipulation of the beautifully plastic material a glimpse is obtained of a lovely contour; the next moment it is lost, changed, blown, and cut away, and the tumbler, glass, or bottle, in all its crudeness, appears ere one can exclaim, "Do stop!" The very nature of the industry is an art in itself, but a debased art, as practised now. The specimens of glass which have come down to us from the Roman furnaces, and from others even more remote, are beautiful with a beauty with which age has nothing to do. Even the utensils for kitchen use were then full of form.

The thing is a puzzle which is not easily solved. One consideration at which I have hinted is, however, a powerful deterrent factor, and that is the conservatism which has always marked the making of glass wares. Innovations and experiments have



SPECIMENS OF GLASS-WARE FROM OSLER'S.



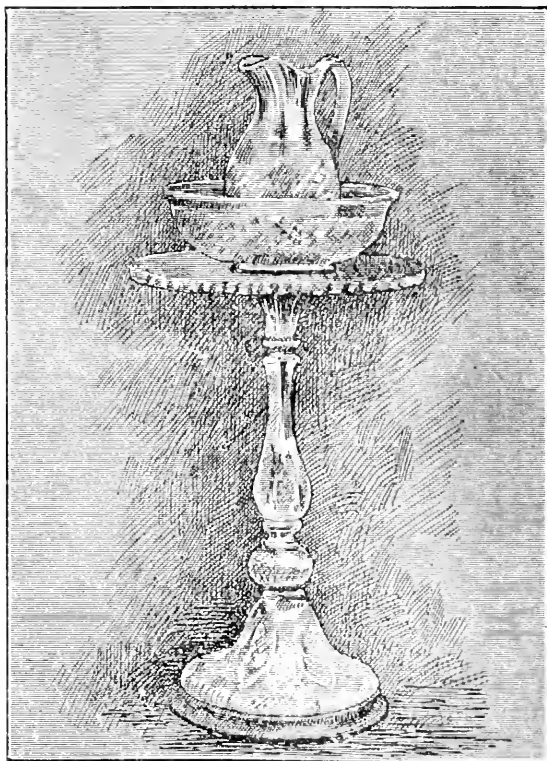
SPECIMEN OF GLASS-WARE. OSLER.

been practically unknown, at any rate for some hundreds of years. In point of fact, we have had no real glass-making art since the schools of Venice and Murano ceased to be. Latterly, however, there has been a revival of these schools, and in England one or two firms of glass-manufacturers have made an attempt to introduce art into their industry, and to produce beautiful and original pieces. As yet their efforts have not met with the success they deserve. There is an unlimited field for their endeavours, and I believe they are prepared to go further when the demand for their innovations shall increase. We are educated by this time into an appreciation of certain forms of industrial art: here is another direction which will merit consideration: here is an industry with the largest possibilities for development.

Glass-blowing is a particularly interesting and attractive thing, for a "glass house," as the scene of its activities is termed, is so different from most manufactories, so called. Glass-blowing is essentially a handicraft, and not a manufacture. The thing which strikes one on first entering a glass-house is the absence of the elaborate machinery,

with its smell, dirt, and noise, which strikes the visitor to many scenes of production so unpleasantly. Within and without there is an old-world suggestiveness about the glass-house. Outwardly its great, cone-shaped chimneys appeal to the artistic sense; inwardly the dusky light, increased at short intervals by the glowing materials out of which the articles are being fashioned, and the occasional glimpses into the hot, glowing furnaces, in which this material is liquid and ready for use, with its curious haze hovering over its surface, make a picture worthy the art of the painter.

The actual material out of which glass goods are made does not permit of much development, and its first discovery is hidden by the ages which have passed. It is generally believed that the discovery of glass was made by accident, or, at any rate, its re-discovery. It is related that some shipwrecked sailors, cast on a sandy beach, made for themselves a huge fire with brushwood and seaweed. When this fire had burnt down, and its ashes were distributed, pieces of semi-transparent material were found, which were very brittle, and were in something between a crystalline and an amorphous state.



SPECIMEN OF GLASS-WARE. OSLER.

It was found afterwards that this material could be re-melted and run into moulds like molten metal. The next step in the development was when a portion of it, in a molten condition, was taken on the end of a hollow tube, and, air being blown into it from the other end, the material expanded and became like a large bubble. When this was cold it was detached from the tube, and a rough bottle or basin was the result.

From these small and extremely simple beginnings the art of glass-blowing has grown. Flat glass for windows, as well as glass vessels, was, and is now, made in this way, though the

It is a pity that they cannot be more frequently met with now, for they are distinctly decorative, in a small way, when placed in windows where transparency is not a desideratum.

The materials out of which the glass was made on the beach, to which I have referred above, were the sand and the ashes of the vegetable matter burnt in the fire. These two, by means of the great heat, were chemically combined to form the new and quite different substance, glass. Speaking a little more exactly and chemically, the actual things which combined were the silica of the beach-sand and the alkaline sub-



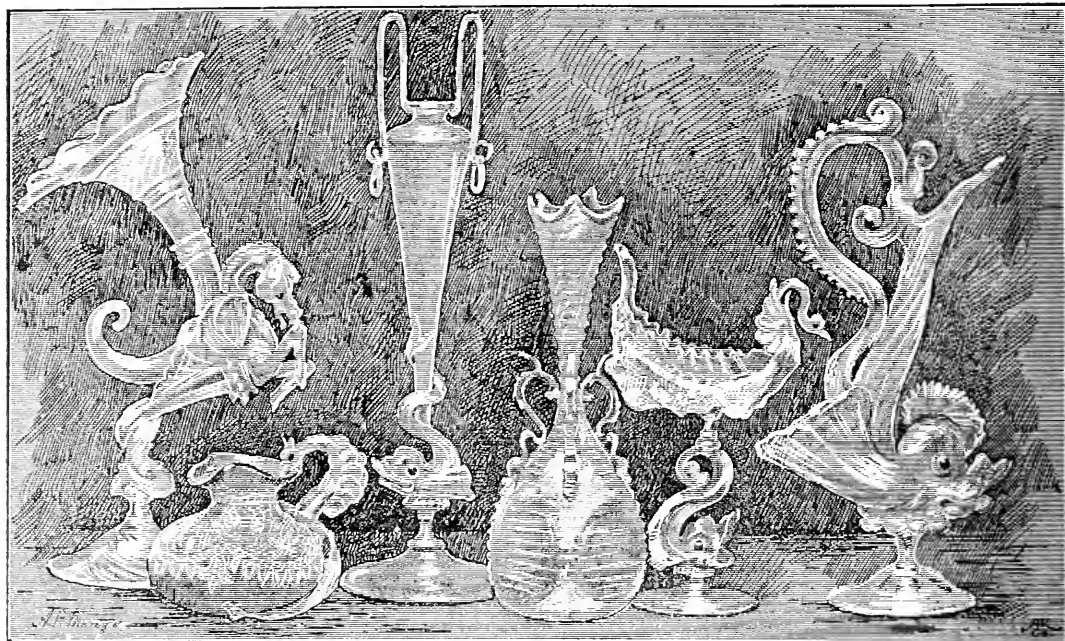
SPECIMENS OF GLASS-WARE FROM OSLER'S.

manufacture of window glass is now generally carried on in a more rapid and more efficacious manner, it being now made in the form of cylinders instead of globes. In the old way a great mass of glass is taken upon the end of the tube, or blow-pipe, as it is called, and blown to its fullest extent; it is then re-heated and severed quickly from the tube, and allowed to fall and spread itself out on a flat surface. In the windows of many old cottages may still be seen green masses of glass, which were the waste pieces still adhering to the blow-pipe after the greater portion had been liberated. These pieces were regarded as waste and sold very cheaply.

stances, soda and potash, contained in the plant-ash, sometimes called pearl-ash. Roughly speaking, these are the materials from which glass is still produced, although different varieties of them are used for the various kinds of window, flint, bottle, and Bohemian glass. These materials practically produce transparent glass. The colours of glass are imparted by the addition of oxides of various metals, as crimson from gold compounds, and therefore expensive, blue from copper, or yellow from iron.

When dealing with "The Printing of Velvets" in my last article, I endeavoured to describe





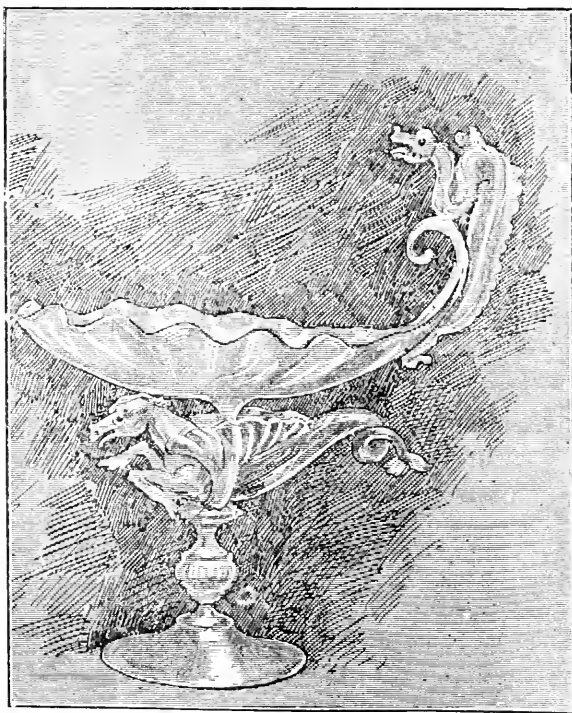
SPECIMENS OF GLASS-WARE FROM SALVIATI.

briefly the actual processes as seen by a visit to the establishment where the work was being carried out, and, in order to do the same thing in the present instance, I applied to Messrs. James Powell & Son, of the "Whitefriars Glass Works," which were founded nearly two centuries ago, and concerning which an advertisement appeared in *The Tatler*, of August 17th, 1810. They courteously explained the various processes, and revived memories of former visits to similar establishments, such as those of Messrs. A. & C. Osler's at Birmingham, and others, my only regret in this connection being my inability at the present time to visit the

famous glass-houses of the Venice and Murano Glass and Mosaic Company at Venice. I did, however, for the purpose of this article,

renew my acquaintance with the products of the Venice-Murano glass-workers, at the show-rooms of the Company in St. James's Street, London, which are filled with beautiful specimens of the art.

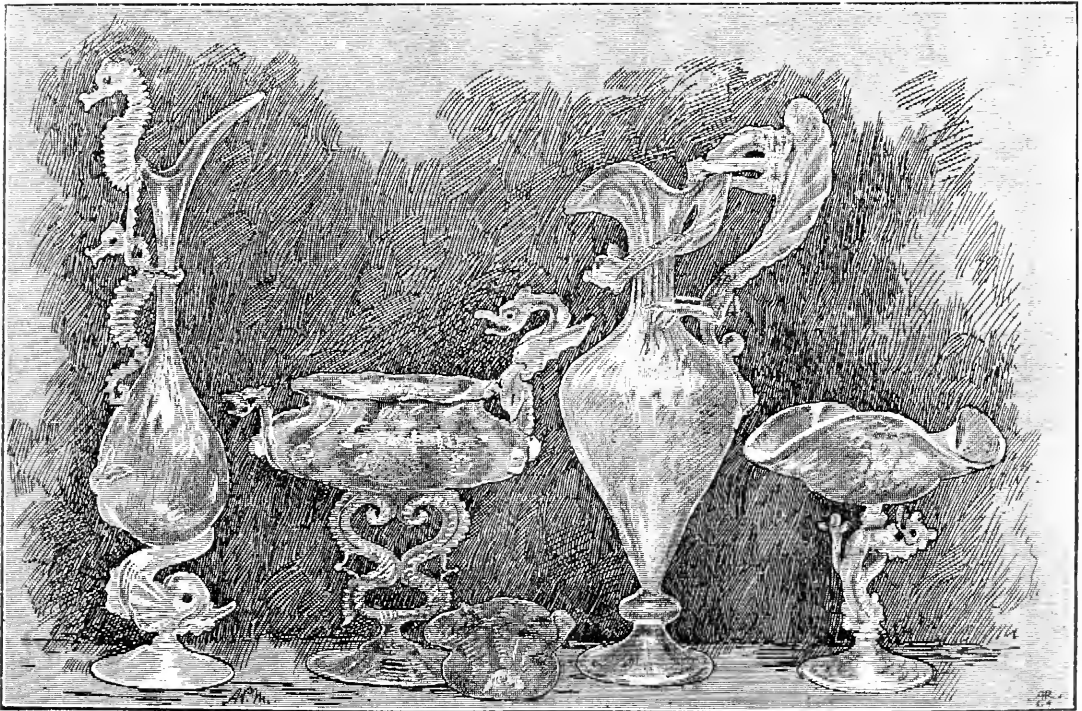
On entering the glass-house, the first department to be visited is the Mixing Room, where the raw materials for the preparation of every kind of glass are kept. In the Pot Room are kept the beehive-shaped crucibles, with an aperture near the apex, in which the material is placed.



SPECIMEN OF GLASS-WARE FROM SALVIATI.



SPECIMENS OF GLASSWARE FROM SALVIATI.



SPECIMENS OF GLASSWARE FROM SALVIATI.

The great furnaces are to be found in the glass-house proper, and in the furnaces one may see these crucibles arranged in a circle. To each crucible there are two sets of workers, each set, or chair, as it is called, consisting of three men and a boy, who work six hours in and out alternately, from Monday morning until Friday mid-day, when the furnace rests. The melted glass is of the consistency of treacle, and the quantity required on the end of the blow-pipe is taken from the crucible by the dexterity of the manipulator. It is then blown by the man's breath into the shape required, being held in the aperture of the crucible at intervals to render it soft and workable. When the piece is blown, the boy carries it to be annealed, either in long passages like burrows, called lears, or in kilns, both supplied with heat, the object of this process being to render the glass less brittle. The pieces having been annealed sufficiently, are then taken to the Weighing Room, where they are carefully sorted, all imperfect ones being returned to the crucibles. As far as plain articles are concerned the processes are now completed, but, for cut-glass, they proceed to the Cutting Shop, where, by means of rapidly-revolving iron, stone, and emery wheels, the cutting, grinding, polishing, and engraving is accomplished.

These processes are as simple as the description

of them, but, for more elaborate pieces, like those produced by the Venice-Murano craftsmen, pieces in which a number of different-coloured glasses are used, and pieces which are twisted, joined, bent, turned, enamelled, inlaid—and what not—a much more complicated method of procedure is necessary, but the basis of all is as I have described it.

Glass-blowing, we may thus see, is not a supremely-difficult handicraft, but it is one with

infinite possibilities which we can only hope may be reduced to practice at an early date. Glass we have had with us from the earliest times: the Egyptians produced it in the sixth dynasty, and pictures of its making adorn the tombs as early as 1800 B.C. The Phenicians, too, had glass wares for sale, and glass was made in Italy at the foundation of the Roman Empire. The exact date of the first glass-making in Britain is not known, but glass was plentiful and cheap at the time of the Roman occupation. Whether it was made here or not is unknown, but in all probability it was, and even before that time.

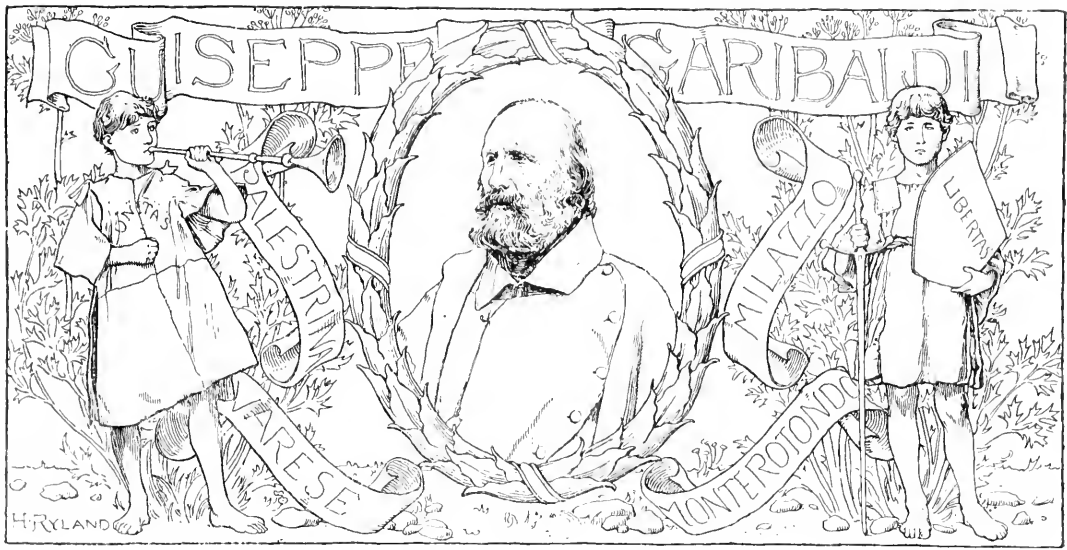
Here, then, we have an art of very remote antiquity, and a beautiful art. We can only hope

that our glass-makers will raise it to a state of perfection unreached before, and that their efforts will be seconded by the many to whom things of beauty for every-day use are a pleasant possession.



GLASS-WARE: SALVIATI.





## GARIBALDI IN LONDON.

BY ISABELLA FVIE MAVO.

THERE are few historic periods which are to us so misty and indistinct as those just beyond the reach of our own memories. In general, we know far more about the Norman Conquest, or the Plantagenet or Tudor dynasties, than we know of the sequence and significance of events occurring within the twenty-five years before our own existence. One finds that, by the time one approaches middle life, one can occasionally make oneself quite interesting to younger people, by relating personal recollections of striking incidents or famous personages, and telling their story to those who find them so new and fresh, though they are so familiar to their elders!

What meaning can most readers of *ATALANTA* attach to the date, April 11th, 1864? Yet what a day that was in London, ay, and in all Great Britain—a day when the heart of the whole land went forth to welcome a man of the grand antique type—"one of Plutarch's men," as he has been aptly called—Giuseppe Garibaldi, the "Liberator" of Italy.

He had been a great conqueror, a man before whom a kingdom had fallen like a house of cards. But it was not as a conqueror only that we thought of him—indeed, by that time he was no conqueror, but a defeated and wounded man. A touch of chivalric tenderness saved our admiration from any suspicion of vulgarity. His past military glories served but as the pedestal on which to raise

him high enough for us to see the simple grace and dignity, the sterling worth, of the man himself.

The young people of to-day can scarcely realise the time when the name of "Italy" conjured up thoughts of dungeons and exiles, and cruel deaths by swift execution or slow torture. Indeed, there was no "Italy" in those days. "Italy" was but the dream in which patriots and poets foresaw the fusion of the little states and kingdoms in which their beautiful country, "the Juliet of the nations," lay divided, with foreign armies occupying well nigh all her classic cities. We used to see the Italian exiles in our streets, and to note the gentle music of their voices. After the attempted revolution of 1848 there were crowds of them—grave, stately folk they generally were, easily to be discriminated from the more voluble refugees from France. Quiet, law-abiding people they appeared to be, only now and again a terrible assassination of some unknown foreigner seemed to denote that the last dread penalty had been exacted from some traitor to one of those "secret societies" which ramified the Italian nation at home or in exile. Nearly every schoolgirl of those days had at least heard of the poet Silvio Pellico and his pathetic book, "In my Prison," the record of his ten years' solitary confinement in the dungeons of Venice and Spielberg. The British Government itself had protested against the King of Naples' barbarous

treatment of political prisoners. London had witnessed the jubilation of its Italian residents, when the patriot Poerio, with 66 companions—released after years of miserable confinement, only to be deported to South America—seized the vessel in which they were voyaging, and brought her triumphantly into British waters and freedom.

This was in 1859. In the following year, the history of modern Italy began. But we are not to attempt its formal recapitulation here.

"Italia Unita!" was the battle cry of this revolution, and the statesman Cavour was its brain, and the hero Garibaldi was its arm. Its history reads like a chapter from Tacitus. Think of Garibaldi, with his "thousand heroes," landing at Marsala, marching on to Naples, and driving in his open carriage right under the guns of the royal fort!

Some of us may have heard the Rev. Mr. Haweis tell the story of that scene—how there was a sort of awful suspense—would the royal troops be true to their master, or to their country? General Garibaldi was face to face with magical victory or certain death. He rose in his carriage, and, looking straight up at the enemies' guns, in stentorian tones he bade his coachman "Drive slower!"—and yet again, "Slower still!" And then the ringing cheers broke from the Neapolitan troops—and the kingdom passed from cruel Bomba's son and his poor young Bavarian queen.

Think of that other scene, when, victory following victory, Garibaldi met the patriot King of Sardinia, and hailed him "King of Italy," while the other acknowledged the power of "the King-maker" by the simple words—"I thank you."

Alas! alas! the virtue of gratitude, and of loyal support to those whose past services merit it, are at least as rare among nations as among individuals! Garibaldi could not rest until the whole of Italy was made one. The new Italian government—the government which owed its very existence to his efforts—by its vacillating policies first encouraged him to make onslaught on the Papal States; and then, probably in fear of provoking the hostility of the Emperor of the French, actually sent troops against him, engaged him in conflict, wounded him (so that ever afterwards he was lame), and took him prisoner!

And that was the last of his public life, before he came to us on that April day!

It was such a beautiful day. April is often one of the happiest months in London. The great city has brushed aside her winter gloom and dust, and is prinking herself for her "season." The budding trees are fresh and green, not yet scorched and wilted. And the London of 1864 was not quite the London of to-day. True, it could not boast its noble embankment by the river, but it was then full of quaint corners, which have since been invaded by railway stations and monster hotels. The air, too, seemed purer and sweeter—there was no "underground" in those days to belch forth sulphurous vapours.

There had been no formal preparation for Garibaldi's entrance into London. He was to be received by some private friends connected with the City Corporation, and he was to be the guest of the Duke of Sutherland at that Stafford House which the Queen is said to have called "a palace." During the day before the General's arrival, some people in the suburbs, hearing that seats were to be for letting on the line of route, laughed the idea to scorn, and suggested that very low fees would suffice!

Garibaldi was expected to reach the West-End in the early afternoon. Full of ardent girlish enthusiasm, I and a companion started forth in very good time to secure a coign of vantage. But where should we find it? Charing Cross was one densely-packed mass of humanity. We managed to push our way through wide Cockspur Street. Pall-Mall we found well nigh impassable, so we skirted it by back by-ways, turning into it again and again to see if prospects were more hopeful. In vain. There were few flags and little decoration to be seen; but the fronts of the houses were all crowded, save one or two of the most fashionable clubs, whose members stood about at the windows in pairs, with slightly discontented countenances, while the appearance of some unpopular politician elicited an occasional expression of disapprobation, or a jeer from the crowd.

I suppose there must have been policemen in that crowd, but certainly they were so little in evidence that I do not remember them as one of its features. Yet the multitude was of that vast, dense character which is often supposed to require the control of cavalry. The people filled the roadways as well as the pavements,

standing about without any pretence of forming in line. Carriage traffic seemed wholly suspended.

But the crowd itself was so wonderful. The "rough" element seemed entirely absent: it was evident that the interest of the occasion appealed to another set. There were a great many men and women of the higher artisan class, who must have snatched their holiday only at some cost. Everybody looked neat and respectable. Hour after hour passed, yet all remained cheerful and orderly in their long patience. Faces were shining with enthusiasm. Friends talked eagerly together. Even strangers exchanged confidences. "A touch of high emotion" was on us all.

"It was a sight for sin, and wrong,  
And slavish tyranny to see—  
A sight to make our faith more pure and strong  
In high humanity."

The romantic nerve which runs in the hardest nature was a-thrill in all of us.

At last we found a place where we could stand somewhat at our ease. The line of route did not seem to be quite surely ascertained, and some people had doubts whether it comprised this corner, so that there was room for us.

We stood there for hours, content that, though we might not see very well, we should yet see something. I remember the drift of our conversation: it was doubtless a fair type of much of the talk going on in that vast crowd. We talked about the hardy rearing this great man had had in his fisher-father's home in Genoa. It was not till years afterwards that I saw the portrait of his mother—a noble, severe-looking old dame, doubtless a strict disciplinarian, and true and staunch to the backbone, such a woman as we may readily find among "grave livers" in the Scotland even of to-day.

We spoke of Garibaldi's adventurous youth—his energies ever thrown into the scale against tyranny wherever he found it—of his impetuous wooing of the beautiful Anita de Silva, who, alas! broke her engagement with an earlier lover for the sake of this bold bridegroom. It is not every day that a Guiseppe Garibaldi comes to woo, and who knows what may have been the strange magnetic attraction possessed by this man, who could dare to "drive slower" in the face of a presumably hostile garrison? Pity poor Anita in her short, sweet, stormy, married life, nursing her little ones,

and then surrendering them to her husband's mother, and sharing all his dangers in the blighted revolution of 1849, until that day of flight and misery, when heart and strength failed her, and she lay down and died, and was buried by strangers in a grave which nobody knows, on the shores of the Adriatic. Pity her the more, because all the tragedy of her romantic love did not save her from the Nemesis of her slighted faith to her first love. We are told that the bitterest agony of her last hour was the sense that she was leaving behind him for whom she had sacrificed all, and was going alone into the spirit land where her slighted lover, who had died before her, was awaiting her. Poor Anita!

We waited and waited. The great crowd swayed slowly to and fro. We all wondered at the delay, and conjectured that it was due to the unprepared-for warmth of the British welcome.

At last we felt that we must wait no longer. It was not that our patience failed. We had been on our feet for nearly two hours, and we would have remained to the end, however long it might be postponed. But we knew there were elders at home who would be anxious about us, and sorrowful and disappointed we took our homeward way, leaving behind the great crowd, never growing less, but always more.

We had gone a little distance, away down back streets, when a mighty roar of acclamation announced that the triumphant moment had come just too late for us! But not too late for us to have learned for ever that human nature has a passion for hero-worship, and is never so happy as in yielding to a rapture of reverence and love!

Though we did not see Garibaldi that day, we saw him afterwards, two or three times, driving to and from the houses of his hosts. There was never the slightest pomp or formality about his *entourage*. He sat in his carriage with two or three English friends about him. He wore his famous red shirt, with a grey cloak thrown about his shoulders, and a small cap on his head, which, however, was generally raised as he saluted the cheering crowds which attended him, whenever and wherever he went out. In short, those crowds hung about all day on the pavement outside Stafford House, and about the area railings of the General's later host—a Member of Parliament living on the margin of Hyde Park.

The General's costume, as we have described it, was absolutely appropriate to the man, and as fit for direct artistic treatment as was his character for the page of romance and poetry. His face was characterised by its simplicity and good humour. He always looked pleased by the enthusiasm about him, but his pleasure was as unself-conscious as if another had been the object of that enthusiasm. His complexion was fresh, though his face was lined. His thin hair was of chestnut, softening into silver. His grey eyes beamed with kindness. His presence had that ineffable charm that always attends strength, which is held at the service of others. "He is like what my father was," cried one good daughter, who had had cause to adore her own dead parent. One felt so about Garibaldi: all his life long he had probably reminded everybody of what was dearest and best. Yet one could easily see the fire and force beneath the geniality. The upright figure and the noble pose of the head, were the outcome of the spirit within. "He who bends his back too low," said the General, "may find it hard to straighten it again." He knew no such temptation!

His two sons had accompanied him to this country. They seldom drove with him, but generally in a carriage following his. The eldest, Menotti, had already been the partner of his father's victories, had been wounded with him at Aspromonte, and had shared his imprisonment. He was a handsome young man, dark in complexion (it was said he resembled his mother) and somewhat reserved and severe of aspect. The younger, Ricciotti, who had spent his early life in England, under the kind care of a lady who had taken compassion on his motherless infancy, was of a softer type, with the suggestion of a slightly cynical smile.

The General's daughter Teresa was not with her father in England, having already (if I remember rightly) become the wife of one of his officers, Signor Canzio. Those who had seen her at Caprera, her father's island home, spoke of her as a dignified and fine-looking damsel, of a grave and thoughtful mien, which can well be believed, if there was any truth in the story current in society at the time, that Magin, the sculptor, had modelled his famous "Reading Girl" from the face and form of Teresa Garibaldi.

The home life at Caprera was always of the

simplest and most wholesome kind. The man who had made a nation had never wasted a thought on making his own fortune. There were no servants, in the ordinary sense, at Caprera. The "Kingmaker's" family worked with their own hands. They got through all their farming and domestic operations with the assistance of the "friends" who were always staying with them, for the General's house was never closed to old comrades. Indeed, his unsuspecting goodness of heart made him an easy prey to the scheming, the indolent, or the odd. Travellers visiting Caprera were often unfavourably struck by the appearance of some of those to whom the great man ungrudgingly dispensed prolonged hospitalities. When some of Garibaldi's English friends resolved to present him with a yacht that he might be the more free to move about or leave his island home, it was mooted that the cost of the upkeep and manning of the vessel would involve the General in more expense than he might like. When this came to the ears of one of his sons, the young man eagerly explained that there need be no fear on that score: "We will do all the work among ourselves," said he.

Among my memories of that time, though rather later than the General's visit to England, is a curious little glimpse of the Caprera home, and of "the lives that the women live" in the shadowy background of history-making. It was shown in a story told me by Ricciotti Garibaldi, whom I met in the company of his adoptive English mother at a quiet little evening party, given in the pretty Kensington home of a well-known literary man and his better-known wife.

In an aside from a general conversation on the many strange things which lie beyond the philosophy of the merely practical "Horatios" of Society, Ricciotti Garibaldi said that they had had their own "mystery" at Caprera. One of his father's expeditions (he told me which expedition, but my memory will not be quite positive on that point) had begun, as usual, in the utmost secrecy. A band of trusted men, many of them old personal friends, had gathered on the island, and then, under the shadow of night had embarked in a little vessel for the mainland. Among these was a youth whose family had been on the most intimate terms with the General's, a sister of his being Teresa Garibaldi's special friend. This

sister had accompanied her brother to Caprera, and was to remain there as Teresa's companion during the dreadful suspense of the expedition.

The embarkation took place—the ship sailed. All was silent and desolate where recently there had been such excitement and enthusiasm. The two girls were left in the deserted house without any other companion than an aged man, who was to serve them in their simple housekeeping. They got through some dreary hours in the best fashion they could, and were not sorry to retire to rest. Leaving their old servitor clearing away their evening meal, the two girls went off to their sleeping chamber—a room approached from a corridor, on which opened three or four other dormitories, all empty and echoing now. The young visitor, carrying a light in her hand, advanced a few steps before the General's daughter, who heard her utter a sudden exclamation, not of alarm, and then saw her step hastily forward and pause. She explained that her brother must have come back, he was standing at the door of his room, and, as they came in sight, had retired within. They thought it very strange, but they were quite used to unexpected comings and goings, and to the need for secrecy. So they made a brief pause, but, when one or two gently-uttered callings of the familiar name failed to bring any answer, a feeling of uneasiness awoke. They went to the room, found the door still wide open and the apartment empty! The old attendant was summoned, and a general search made, wholly without result. Uneasiness now gave place to terror and premonition of evil. The young visitor was inconsolable. She was sure her brother was killed, and that, thinking of her in his last moments, he had appeared to her to break the blow of the sad news. Teresa Garibaldi and the old Italian refused to take this gloomy view, especially, as the latter sensibly urged, no real danger was yet incurred by anybody, since no fighting could have been begun, for the whole party must be still safely voyaging through the fine, clear night across the calm waters.

"But for all that," said Riciotti Garibaldi, "the first tidings from the expeditionary party conveyed the news of that young man's death. In the course of some nautical manipulations he had fallen overboard, and was drowned at the very hour that his sister had sprung forward to greet his wraith in the corridor of the Caprera house."

The story itself is one of the type most common among all those legends of the unknown world, which we are apt to whisper of "between the lights." Its only interest is in the place where it occurred and the individuals and incidents connected with it. But think of that lonely house, within sound of the eternal wash of the unresting sea, and of the two girls, their dear ones all gone, waiting, waiting, with nothing more to do but wait, wait, and—

"Bear to think  
You're gone—to feel you may not come—  
To hear the door latch stir and clink,  
Yet no more you."

Before men dare to be heroes they must, surely, have heroic women at home!

General Garibaldi's visit to this country came to a rather abrupt conclusion. There were perplexities, misgivings. His was an uncomfortable figure for politicians to find in their narrow and sinuous paths. He not only told simple truths, and nothing but the truth, but he told all the truth. He did not understand reserves. In political life he was as awkward a subject as a plain-spoken school-boy at an afternoon tea, where the polite people cannot help loving him, even while they sigh, "Oh dear, dear, what will he say or do next?" That is about the worst that can be said of General Garibaldi—that his faults were virtues carried to an extremity. He was a man of action, not of argument or artifice.

So he came among us and went away. But I feel sure that he, and his story, and his character, passed through our stifling social atmosphere like a breeze from the hills blowing down a fetid street.



## A Birthday Song.

Words by THOMAS HOOD.

Music by ALFRED PRATT.

VOICE. *Moderato.* *espress. p cres.*

Good mor-row to the gold-en

PIANO. *p f p p*

*cres.*

morn - ing, Good mor-row to the world's de - light; I've come to bless thy life's be -

Ped. \*

*f* *3* *ff tenuto.* *dim.*  
 - gin - ning, Since it makes my own so bright, Since it makes my  
*p* *cres.* *ff* *colla voce.*  
 Ped.

*p rall.* *a tempo.*  
 own..... so..... bright!.....  
*p rall.* *pp* *a tempo.* *p* *cres.* *f*

*p* *cres.*  
 I have brought no ros - es, sweet - est ; I could find no flow - ers,  
*p*

*f* *dim.* *3* *rall.*  
 dear,-- It was when all sweets were o - ver Thou wert born to bless the  
*fz* *p* *dim.* *rall.*

year.....

But I've brought thee jew-els,

*p a tempo.* *f dim.* *p*

dear - est, In thy bon - ny locks to shine,— And if love shows in their

*f* *cres.* *p* *cres.* *cres.*

Ped. \*

glan - ces, They have learned that look of mine, They have learned that look..... of.....

*f* *f tenuto.* *dim. rall.* *ff* *colla voce.* *p rall.*

Ped. \*

mine.....

*p a tempo.* *a tempo.* *p* *pp* *cres.* *p* *rall.* *pp*

Ped. \*



# A COSTLY FREAK.

By MAXWELL GRAY,

*Author of "The Silence of Dean Maitland."*

## CHAPTER VII.

MILLIE was already late: she dared delay no longer, but ran the few remaining steps to her own door, palpitating, breathless, thrilled with the echo of her own name in George's moved voice. She put the precious letter to her hot cheeks to cool them, but they only grew hotter and hotter; then, all on a sudden, she was inclined to burst out crying.

Opening the door, she stepped into the dimly-lighted, narrow entry, when her senses were assailed by the familiar odour of mineral oil-smoke, and a singular sound, something between nocturnal caterwauling and a canine address to the full moon, sounds both eminently expressive of the tearfulness of things. An unusually prolonged and heart-piercing wail, such as proceeds from the depths of a sensitive feline breast at two in the morning, or thereabouts, toppled her suddenly from purple heights of glowing romance to dead levels of greyest prose, and she became aware of Bella, who was seated on the lowest stair, with her apron over her head and the contents of a reversed coal-scuttle scattered profusely before her. The assembled family were carefully picking up the fragments with shovels and tongs, and taking advantage of intervals between heart-rending wails to bid her be of good cheer, and comfort herself with the reflection that it was not crockery or other frangible matter that was spilt.

"Do stop yowling, and pick up the coals, Bella," piped an impatient, but rational boy's voice from the parlour, where Walter was vainly waiting for his tea.

At this the passage ceiling was almost rent by the out-wailed agony of Bella's soul, and Buffie, hitherto madly barking and joyously dragging at the roll of MS. sermon Mr. Ray had hastily stuffed into his pockets, on seizing the dislocated tongs, with which he was now delicately, but vainly, nipping at small lumps of coal, to the delight of Muffie, the kitten, who, considering the show contrived solely for her amusement, danced daintily on her hind legs, disputing possession of the coals with the ineffectual tongs—Buffie, moved to sudden sympathy with Bella's sorrows, sat down on his tail, and, raising

his chin in a straight line with his chest, uttered a howl of agony which "shivered to the tingling stars," or would have done, but for the upper storey and roof.

So that no one observed Millie's hot cheeks, shining eyes, and exalted look, or wondered why she gave Walter a hug that made him growl and wriggle, and strike out with his small fists, muttering about "girls' silly stuff and molly-coddling;" or why at the tea-table she fondled Muffie and made irrelevant contributions to the family conversation, and poured from the kettle to the teapot without the precaution of first removing the lid of the latter.

For, though Millie's slim young body adorned the family tea-table, her mind was with George Burroughes at the stile beneath the twisted thorn in the level sunshine. Of stiles she had always conceived as being constructed expressly for sweethearts to meet at and bend over—the man quite low, resting on his arms, and looking up earnestly at the maiden erect on the other side, or, perhaps, carelessly stayed against the top bar, her face always a little averted and expressive of a debonair indifference not incapable of changing. Trees usually shadowed those stiles, and honeysuckle and wild rose hedges, always in bloom, were there. Sometimes the sun glowed golden through the leaf-woven canopy, and sometimes that friend and patroness of young lovers, the moon, shot her silver shafts through the dewy leaves upon them. Millie liked the moon-lit stiles best.

So to-night, while making toast at the fire for Walter, and staying her own hunger upon thick bread, daintily adorned with a roseate suggestion of jam, she heard the leisurely caw of homing rooks—sound redolent of fresh breezes, open downs, and wide-arched skies—the tinkle of sheep bells, bleat of new-year lambs, and sounds of human life and labour floating up from the valley, with the blackbird's good-night in low copses, the shrill sweetness of little wrens in hedgerows, and, through all, George's deep, manly voice, modulating into rare sweetness. She breathed the fresh down air, salted by the near sea breath, the sweetness of trodden turf, the wholesome smell of earth fresh turned by the slow

plough on the upland, where they had stopped a moment to see the shining slabs of mould curl along the edge of the share in the straight furrow, with cracking of whips, jingle of gear, shout and song of white-smocked ploughmen and steady straining of beautiful silk-coated horses, saw the glamour and glory of sunset, and sheen of the faintly murmuring sea, with its gleaming surf-fringe, and far, dream-like ships in the golden offing. She breathed the sharpening breath of twilight and pungent odour of earth touched by hoar frost, felt the charm of the first peeping star, "that bringeth all things," the lingering of George's steps, the enchanted silences, his vain efforts to put into words what his heart was over-burdened with, and the final cry of "Millie, Millie," and forgot all about the close little schoolroom, with its slates and copy-books, and was not aware that she was eating her third slice of bread and jam, or that her father had twice asked her for the news of the day.

"Only that Honeybun has at last confessed his innocence, papa. I mean—that is to say, it's proved that he didn't do it."

"But how can that be proved, my dear," her father asked in his mild way, "and who told you this?"

"Mr. Burroughes said that Honeybun is cleared. It is traced to another person."

"Dear me," said Mr. Ray, "dear me, what a pity!"

Then Millie remembered George's words, "I hope he will be sorry," and a nameless horror struck her. "Papa," she cried, turning pale, "a pity?"

"My dearest William!" exclaimed Mrs. Ray. "A pity poor Honeybun is cleared!"

"Dear Edith, there is the really guilty person to be considered. Poor Honeybun is too well known as a dishonest person. Now, the poor creature who really did this thing, yielding perhaps to some piteous and uncontrollable temptation," said Mr. Ray, looking through tear-dimmed eyes at Walter, whose cheeks were plumper than they had been, "may—who can tell?—hitherto have led an upright life. Honeybun is, I sadly fear, hardened by long indulgence in sin and distaste for holy things, though there is grace for him, as for all. But *this* poor sinner——" Mr. Ray paused, his lip quivered, his voice broke.

"Why, father," Walter cried, "you seem to know who it is. It must be a friend of yours."

"Are not all my parishioners my friends, Wattie?" replied Mr. Ray, absently stroking the soft brown head of Buffie, who sat begging, with one ear knowingly cocked, and a grin of complacent villainy on his queer little wrinkled black face.

"Let us earnestly trust that it is not a parishioner, or, if so, that it is at least a Dissenter!" ejaculated Mrs. Ray, with pious fervour.

Far be it from us to ascribe bigotry or moral callousness to this gentle and kind-hearted lady, but it must be confessed that, what with her own sins and shortcomings, the family troubles, the family mending and marketing and the serious difficulty of keeping house and preserving what in her youth was termed a genteel appearance upon scarcely anything a year, together with her many sorrows and privations, she found her sympathies so much over-crowded as to leave but scant room to admit personal grief for iniquities committed outside of her family and her parish.

Unlike many wives whose Silver Wedding is past, Mrs. Ray still admired and appreciated her husband, yet she was, at times, tempted to muse whether she might not have been "earthlier happy" with a man who cared a little more for her temporal needs, and, without being less anxious for her soul's welfare, was a little less apt in publicly discovering Biblical passages that exactly applied to her private sins and shortcomings. But these feelings arose, she well knew, from her unworthiness and carnal-mindedness.

It seemed to Millie that evening that she would never find the necessary opportunity of privately delivering the precious, fateful note to her father. "It may part us," George Burroughes said. How little he guessed what was in her heart! This modesty of true love, in one in every way so superior to her, was most captivating. Such diffidence was surely very rare, the poor child mused, pressing the sacred envelope to her innocent heart, while she watched her opportunity. She found it at last in the kitchen, where Mr. Ray had passed an hour in preparing Bella for confirmation.

It was easy to dispatch Bella on some errand and detain Mr. Ray a moment by the kitchen fire. He looked tired and worn; the thin hands he spread to the fire trembled in a way that went to his child's heart. It struck her that an hour

spent in trying to open up some passage to that yet undiscovered bourn, Bella's intellect, might be fatiguing: her heart bounded at the thought of the unexpected and lasting pleasure this letter of George's would give him.

"Wait a bit, papa," she said, recklessly stirring the fire to a wasteful, voluptuous blaze, "here is a letter for you from Mr. Burroughes. He asked me to give it privately into your hands."

"Oho!" returned her father, smiling with arch and gentle pleasantry, as he saw the colour rush into her face. "Mr. Burroughes, Millie? It strikes me that we hear a good deal of Mr. Burroughes, in these days. I must enquire into this. Pray, my dear, how did Mr. Burroughes come to entrust notes to your hand, rather than to that of an ordinary messenger?"

"He—ah—he met me, papa," faltered Millie, in blissful confusion.

"Where, Millie? We heard nothing of any meeting, when the news of the day was discussed at tea, I think."

"On the down, near Little Buckley," confessed the guilty Millie, in a low voice, happy tears clouding her downcast eyes.

"For the first time?"

"No," in a very, very faint voice.

"My dear, have you told your mother?"

"Y—yes, that is, I mean, she knew. I haven't told her to-night, though, at least, not yet."

"Don't cry, Millie, don't cry. Always tell your mother everything, my dear, everything. You have always been a good girl, and a great comfort to us. You only need true conversion, Millie, and that I continually pray for, and know will come. God bless you, my dear child!"

Millie threw her arms round his neck, kissed him and fled. Mr. Ray remained with the letter in his hand, turning it this way and that, looking, with a pleased, gentle smile on his face, at the dancing flames in the kitchen grate.

"Burroughes is very lovable," he mused, "many gifts are his. He is genial, honest, pleasant, and manly. He does not preach conversion, it is true, nor has he any real conviction of sin. Who knows but he may have been unconsciously converted? Of the elect, without being yet aware of it? A beautiful character, that will doubtless grow in grace! *Fiat voluntas tua!* William Ray, William Ray! how great are the

blessings with which your cup is brimming! You who murmured, you, who deemed the loving discipline of your Heavenly Father over-severe! Fie on you! Where was your faith? Is He not always present in the storm, though sleeping, perchance, in the hinder part of the vessel? Oh, thou of little faith! Wherefore didst thou doubt? Wherefore didst thou doubt?"

He bowed his head and covered his face with his thin hands: the light of the leaping blaze played over the scant, long, grey hair, and a hidden cricket chirped a merry refrain through a few seconds. Then Mr. Ray lifted a face alight with serene radiance, and, drawing the benzoline lamp to the edge of the deal table, broke the seal—a large red one, stamped with the Burroughes' arms—and drew out and unfolded the letter in the double light of fire and lamp. A peculiar, faint, crisp crackle directed his attention to a tiny pin fastening to the thick note-paper three thin, silvery, water-marked sheets, on each of which his astonished eyes read the Bank of England's mandate to pay the bearer ten pounds. Was it going to rain bank-notes, or was he dreaming?

The first pungent sense of pleasure at sight of these gave way to pain and bewilderment: nothing was owing to him, and this was scarcely an occasion on which to raise his salary; how could Burroughes do anything so coarse and ungraceful? It was not like him. He looked sorrowfully at the fire a minute and then turned to the letter, which was as follows, in the clear, bold, rather small hand-writing with which he was now familiar:—

*Freshford Rectory,*

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR, *Feb. 28.*

It is with the deepest regret that I write to inform you that one of the missing notes has been traced. It was presented for payment at the Imperial and Agricultural Bank at Winchester, on the day following its disappearance, by a person well-known to the cashier. Unless that person can at once satisfactorily account for his possession of the note, he will be arrested on the charge of stealing it. I am bound to prosecute. The utmost I can do is to defer the arrest for twenty-four hours at the latest. During that period the guilty person may escape. He would of course try to reach Spain. I earnestly hope he may do so, and thus avoid a terrible scandal, as well as avert grave trouble from his unfortunate and innocent family.

I am, Reverend and dear Sir,

Very truly yours,

GEORGE BURROUGHES.

P.S.—I have arranged to take both wedding and funeral to-morrow.

Mr. Ray read the letter twice, and then sat staring stupidly before him, with his head bent forward and his chin sunk on his breast. Millie's reckless and extravagant blaze had burnt itself down to a dry crackle in the small pinched-up range, the cricket chirped on merrily, his song challenging comparison with

"The grasshopper's among some grassy hills," to the listener, half lost in drowsiness, by the fire.

Steps were then heard approaching, and Mrs. Ray came into the kitchen on some household errand, closely followed by Bella. Mr. Ray thrust the letter into his pocket and rose, gazing abstractedly about him, like one in a dream. His presence in the sacred apartment consecrated to those tyrannous domestic gods, the servants of middle-class households, was not unusual: his wife scarcely observed that he was there, or that he went out when she and Bella came in.

He wandered slowly into the parlour, where he found Walter alone and busy with his Virgil: he heard the sound of the piano from the cold room in which Millie was conscientiously practising with freezing fingers and a heart warm with youth's deepest, dearest glow, and his lips quivered. He looked at Walter, who was too much absorbed to observe his entrance, and took his usual place at the dining-table, where his desk and books were arranged for him with affectionate care, and, shading his face with his hand, in a way habitual to him, seemed lost in profound study.

Presently Walter looked up, and, seeing the familiar, bent figure sitting there, asked a question concerning the unfortunate Queen of Carthage, and was duly enlightened. Buffie, lying flat on his back, with all his legs in the air, snarled faintly at a dream-foe, and the kitten, Muffie, stretched at length on her side, like a small dead tiger, extended her legs to their utmost limit, and then comfortably expanded her claws and curled them cosily up again, as if firmly grasping solid bliss. Millie practised her hour out and then waited, expecting her father: but he did not come. The night had turned very cold, the wind roared: she heard the thunder of surf on the distant shore, her fingers ached with the pinching frost, but her cheeks kept their soft glow.

"The letter may part us," some mocking spirit echoed in her burning ears, as she packed away the music and entered the dim, silent parlour, with

its three familiar figures clustered about the lamp. No one looked up at her quiet entrance, and the evening wore itself out as usual until the supper-hour came. Then Mr. Ray went out of the room, and returned with hat, gloves, comforter and overcoat.

"I am going to that poor Perkins, my dear," he said, beginning to put on his overcoat by the fire; "He will probably pass away this night. No, Edith, I will not stop for our bread and cheese, thank you. I will take some in my pocket to consume during the night."

Here he was interrupted by exclamations of horror and dismay. Surely he could not contemplate sitting up all night with the dying man!

"But, my dears," he replied in his gentle voice, "what do you suppose clergymen are made for, if not to pilot sin-burdened souls through the dark valley? Who knows but this poor man may, at the last moment, repent, if the Cross is faithfully held before him? Does Caroline remonstrate with *her* husband when he visits patients in the night, and that only for the sake of the poor perishing body? You will conduct family prayer in my absence, dear Edith, and, not to disturb people, I will remain till morning, in any case. I may be able to console the poor mourners. Oh, I will take care of myself, trust me. As the night is sharp, I will take a glass of Walter's port—luxurious fellow, with his port wine and beef tea and hot suppers! He is becoming a perfect alderman! Look at his fat cheeks! Look at them!" repeated Mr. Ray, gently pinching the lad's ear, as he sipped the unaccustomed luxury. "We shall have Wattie rowing in the University Eight by and by, eh, Mother? God bless you all, my dears. Goodnight. Goodnight."

## CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN the street-door closed upon her father and she heard his steps dying away in the distance on the frosty road, Millie's heart dropped like a stone in her breast. He might, oh! he might have spared one moment to tell her of the fateful letter, which "may part us." What were pangs of dying in comparison with the anguish of a young, living, loving heart, torn by such suspense of hope and fear as hers? What deadly secret was in the letter that she had so cherished for the sake of the strong, kind hand that wrote

it? Her pillow was very wet that night and the soft, brown eyes were clouded with tears and the strong impetuous, unbearable anguish of passionate unreasoning youth. She fell asleep at last and dreamed the sweet afternoon and tender gloaming, echoing with the cry of "Millie, Millie!" over again, and woke, as the young wake, to renewed hope.

But breakfast passed with no message from her father. A vague uneasiness brooded on the small household. Mrs. Ray scarcely touched the frugal fare before her, but kept rising and looking from the window to watch for her husband's approach, his absence from breakfast being almost without precedent. Millie lingered till her mother scolded her and hustled her off with just ten minutes in which to walk the long two miles. She deviated from her usual route to pass Perkins's cottage, in the hope of meeting her father, and saw by the blinds in the windows that the sick man still lived. Then she had to go at a furious pace to be in time, and finally reached Little Buckley, breathless, late, and with a wounded heart.

George Burroughes was just then walking into the church to marry the waiting couple. Having done this he lingered in the vestry, doing nothing, but, as the sexton subsequently observed, fidgeting. Then he went home, took off his coat and waistcoat, and dug a large piece of potato ground, the surface of which was frozen hard. His cousin, Maud, who had been away and had just returned to finish the long visit begun some weeks before, came out at one o'clock to bid him to luncheon, but he refused, had a glass of ale and some bread and cheese sent out to him, and dug on till it was time for the funeral, which he duly performed.

On returning from the funeral he called at Mr. Ray's, where Bella informed him that her master was asleep on his bed, and was not to be disturbed, having been up all night.

"Why, George," said his mother, meeting him in the garden, "what is it? Not taken?"

"No, worse—the worst. Gone to Spain. Not a line or a word. The money not returned. Up all night! Sleeping it off! One sees through it all. What on earth could Ray be up all night for?"

"My dear George! Those poor Rays! I am grieved. Should I go to her, do you think?"

"Not yet; not till to-morrow, at least. One *may* be mistaken even now. There's just the ghost of a chance. No letter, I suppose?"

"Nothing. Where is the inspector?"

"On the watch. The earths are all stopped. Oh, mother!" He turned and rushed into the kitchen garden, where the earth was now hardening with increasing frost, took a pickaxe to break up the ground with and went to work in good style for a couple of hours without stopping. From the savage and determined way in which he hewed at the frozen bosom of patient mother earth, it might have been the devil and all his works, instead of the source of human nourishment. Click, click, click, went the pickaxe on the frost-bound earth, until several rows of two foot long cubes a foot and a-half deep, were turned up to receive the action of the frost, to the great joy of some robins and thrushes, hopping in his traces, and the satisfaction of the gardener, who was leisurely giving his mind to the growth of things, with the aid of a pipe in his mouth. "As good as a load of manure, let alone clearing the ground," thought this worthy man, sitting comfortably on the handles of his wheelbarrow, and observing the rector's mighty strokes from a distance.

The sky was a chill steel grey, and the wild North-Easter so fervently invoked the day before, bit keener and keener as the hours passed, making leafless branches clatter and laurel and bay trees rattle their stiff leaves together. George had picked up a pretty piece of ground and was stopping to look at it and wipe his hot forehead with a sort of surly satisfaction, when the tap of a light footstep, mingling with the patter of leaves on the path sheltered by the laurel hedge, was heard, and Maud Ascott, cosily wrapped in furs, and with a face glowing from the North-Easter's rough salute, appeared, carrying a large cup of tea.

"Cat-lap!" growled the ungracious recipient, on hearing that his mother had sent it out with earnest requests for its reception. "I verily believe that women think a cup of tea a consolation for every earthly ill—Whether banks smash, or human limbs or hearts, whether relations die or cut one off with a shilling, whether one is fried alive in August or frozen to death in December, it's all the same."

"It cheers but not inebriates," as Mr. Swinburne so beautifully observes," replied his cousin.

"Come George, cheer up! Take the cup and drink it up, and call the neighbours in.' I am convinced things will be cleared up, and everybody live happy ever after."

"Never. He would have returned the three ten pound notes, at least, before this. It's a case of fly by night, Maud."

"Not at all. I believe in your curate, George. It was a case of love at first sight. This ship flies the curate's colours through thick and thin, remember."

"Then this ship will soon have to haul her colours down."

"Not a bit of it. They're nailed to the mast. The dear old man has a sneaking kindness for me, too, and I know he secretly admires me, because he tried to convert me the very first day he saw me. He rebuked my vanity. Now my clerical relations have never rebuked my vanity or tried to convert me."

"You are a brick, Maud, and a thorough-paced one," he replied, with irrelevant fervour and reckless metaphor. "The tea isn't bad, after all. You always stick to a fellow when he's down in his luck. But it's no go about poor old Ray. My best hope is that trouble has turned his brain and he believes in all this sickening cant about answered prayer. But old port straight from heaven, with the year of vintage obligingly mentioned! That beats me."

"Now, I'll tell you three things, George, if you'll put on your coat, and behave like a respectable parson of a parish. Firstly: Mr Ray has relations dependent on him, which accounts for his extreme poverty. Secondly: I know where the old port came from, and he doesn't, and poor little Millie cut up her only fur to make Walter's coat and paid for the cloth and tailoring; and Dr. Browne knows a thing or two, and—and—I believe Mr. Ray is as simple-minded as—as—St. Francis of Assisi."

"I could fall at your feet for this," gasped George, turning away with two great tears hopping over his face, "but—but how account for the running away with the ten-pound notes?"

"Why, you tiresome fellow," returned his cousin, in a rather uncertain voice, with marvellous softness in her large, pansy-like eyes, "you won't listen to the third thing. Mr. Ray sat up all last night with that poor Perkins, who died at noon today. He never left the house till nearly two this afternoon, when he was quite knocked up. George,

he may never have read your letter. He may be able to account for possession of the stolen note, after all."

"Heaven bless you, Maud," ejaculated her cousin, stealthily flicking the last of the big tears away with his finger. "Are you *sure* of these things, you angel?"

"Is thy servant nine dead donkeys? Geordie, the thief may have given Mr. Ray the note in return for cash."

"Good Lord!" cried George. "it's just possible. Maud, you should have told me this at first."

"Alas! the gratitude of man  
Hath oftener left me mourning,"

said Maud, half laughing and half crying, to herself, when George, having unceremoniously put the large breakfast-cup into her hands, rushed off without a word or even a look. "Oh, George, were you ten thousand bishops or a quarter of a million hussars, you would still be a man—a real live, good-hearted, lovable, aggravating *man*!"

When she reached the house she looked into a mirror in the hall and found that the wind had put no more colour into her face than was becoming, and had ruffled her fluff of short hair most enchantingly with tiny rings up-curved over the velvet and fur of the toque she wore, and that her dark, heartsease eyes seemed darker and more velvety than ever in the bright face, becomingly set in rich furs. "But," she reflected, turning away, "what does *he* care? If I'd gone out wrapped in a hearthrug, with a stew-pan upon my head, *he'd* never have noticed it, the *wretch*! Poor old George! It will break his heart."

Mr. Ray had just risen, still sleepy, with cold chills running down his back and his bones feeling as if they had all been taken to pieces and wrongly put together again by an idle and inexpert workman: for he was unaccustomed to the dissipation of sitting up all night, which requires a good deal of practice and many luxurious compensations to make it perfectly enjoyable. "A cup of tea will set me quite right, my dear," he replied, with his usual rebuke to his Martha for her over carefulness and trouble. "After all, what is one vigil? One ought to be ashamed of taking an afternoon's sleep to make up. But, somehow, one is not as young as one was, and, my dear, I fear the Marthas are not confined to the weaker sex, I do fear it."

Mr. Ray chuckled gently to himself over his

little joke, and spread his hands before the fire, cheered by the lively song of the kettle and the leaping lustre on the bare walls in the gathering dusk, but most cheered by the sight of Walter, who was rapidly putting on flesh and gaining colour and strength from his generous diet and open-air excursions and bid fair, the doctor reported, to grow out of his weakness altogether, though with one leg shortened, at this rate.

Walter, but for the infirmity which crippled him, was a handsome, well-formed boy: his face, refined, but no longer pinched by suffering, was beautiful, his splendid dark eyes were full of intellect and imagination, the pure, flute-voice of his boyhood was just beginning to break a little with adolescence, but was still, on the whole, clear and round, with the unearthly evanescent sweetness of a boy's treble. He was now reading, at his father's desire, some Latin verses, unusually good, the father thought, renderings of the modern English poet he had just learnt to love: his face was turned towards the firelight, and caught the red glow on the broad, white brow, about which clung and clustered dark, tendrilled hair.

"Of old sat Freedom on the heights,  
The thunders breaking at her feet,"

the voice rolled out in Latin iambics, and Mr. Ray's tired blue eyes kindled, shedding light upon the lad; his heart expanded, his imagination soared. He saw Walter, a healthy and handsome, though fragile man, rising, by the nobility of intellect and character, above his fellows, a star in the ministry perhaps, or at the Bar, or, it was possible, he might be another and a sweeter Milton. Good, scholarly foundations had been laid by the father's own hands; just a little more bodily strength and the boy might win scholarships and exhibitions, and, going on to either University, take honours.

So the old man dreamed and dreamed of the son who had been given him so late in life and with such feeble tenure of it, the boy whose feeble vail had been stilled through long, cold nights of waking and walking up and down, in his own arms, whose childhood had been snatched again and again from the jaws of the grave, whom they had been warned again and again they would scarcely, with the greatest care, bring up to man's estate, a child difficult to train morally because of physical weakness, a child truly of many prayers.

"Millie late again!" said the subject of these dreams, having finished and been commended for his verses: "that's old Burroughes' doing, I'll bet. He's always after her now, that's why she's getting out of her dowdy ways. Girls always do when they have sweethearts."

Mr. Ray's face clouded, the pleasant dreams vanished; gray hard fact confronted him. "My poor Millie," he said to himself, recalling the scene by the kitchen fire and the unexpected contents of the mysterious letter.

At the moment Millie was, in fact, coming so quickly round the corner in the dusk that she nearly rushed into George Burroughes' expectant arms.

"Miss Ray," he said at once, without any preamble, "did you give your father that letter last night?"

"Certainly, Mr. Burroughes," she replied, coldly.

"Into his own hands? Are you *sure* that he read it: quite, quite sure?"

Sweet hope stole into Millie's breast, gleamed a moment, and faded.

"I gave the letter, as you desired, into my father's own hands, when we were alone together, last night. I gave him your message to read it alone, and left him. I know nothing more. I have not seen him alone since. Won't you come in and see my father, and deliver your own message, Mr. Burroughes? He is probably at home,"

"I can't," replied George, "I can't face it. But I—I—I'll be at hand—and—if I can do anything, pray let me. You know—oh! you *know* that I would do anything to be of the smallest use or comfort to you."

He turned and left her, more bewildered than ever, at her own door, near which a tall man in dark blue saluted her as he passed.

"Good evening, Inspector," she said, with cheerful, if constrained affability. "More misdoings, I'm afraid. Who's wanted this time? Tramps or naughty boys? Hen-coops robbed, or gardens?"

"Neither," replied the inspector, with an embarrassed air. "A cold evening, Miss."

"Bitter. I suppose you can't come in and warm yourself?"

"Not at present, thank you. On duty, Miss."

So Millie went in, half ashamed to meet her father after last night's scene in the kitchen, and talked fast, to give herself an air of easy *insouciance*,

hearing the family news and relating her day's adventures and her meeting with Inspector Wilkins. "I shouldn't like to be a policeman," she added. "I'm afraid I should let all the people go, instead of taking them up to encourage the others."

Just then, through a peal of Walter's facile laughter at the notion of Millie in the police force, the front-door bell rang, and there was sudden silence in the fire-lit parlour. Every one recognised something sinister in the familiar tinkle: Millie's heart stood still; it was as if she had long been listening for that every-day sound, mysteriously laden, it seemed, with imminent doom. Buffie conscientiously barked, but not with his wonted energy, he laboured under the delusion that it was his bounden duty to call attention to every ring at the door by a series of ear-rending yowls—but even he felt vaguely uneasy at that bell-ringing, which had something stealthy and suppressed in its sound, as if ashamed of itself. It was quickly followed by the appearance of Bella, smutched as usual with soot, but this time on the forehead, and with her accustomed distraught visage and awe-struck, hoarse whisper.

"If you please, sir, it's only Mr. Barton"—caretaker and attendant at the Parish Room adjacent—"and will Mr. Ray be so kind as step over the perishing room for a minute, because Mr. Wilkins, he ses, he aint agoing to kick his heels out in the cold no longer," she announced, with her habitual knack of supplying detail usually irrelevant to her messages.

Mr. Ray, cosily sipping his fifth cup of tea and beginning to feel on better terms with his own bones, at once rose, wondering at the unaccustomed summons, and hastened out, forgetting even his hat, which Millie dutifully seized and pursued him with. The sight of his thin grey hair streaming in the bitter North-Easter, and only faintly seen in the lamp-light and the last of the dusk, went to her heart, and the slight uncertainty of his hasty steps impressed her. "He is growing old," she thought sadly. Until now her father's age had scarcely been a matter of speculation. To childhood parents are old, like all grown-up people: with adolescence they grow younger, till they go back to middle age, that is, about forty, at which age they remain for years, until a day comes when the filial heart

feels, with a sudden pang, that they are growing old and need care.

She did not see Inspector Wilkins on one side of her father and another man in blue at the other side, while a third followed at a short distance behind, as she turned and ran in out of the freezing wind.

Nor did Mr. Ray. He hurried to the Parish Room a few yards distant, wondering if there was anything the matter with the gas, or some mistake about Bible Classes, and stepped into the empty hall, dimly lighted by a couple of gas-jets, which showed him George Burroughes's face, of a deathly hue and singular expression.

George did not speak, he scarcely knew why he was there, unless it were with some last lingering hope of explanation. He looked at Mr. Ray, strangely: Mr. Ray looked at him, fearfully, with a clear conviction that an evil hour had struck for him. While they were thus silently gazing, the policemen, hesitating no longer, though they had shrunk from their task to the utmost limit of delay, closed round Mr. Ray and arrested him on the charge of stealing certain bank-notes on a certain day.

Mr. Ray staggered and went white. "*Those* notes," he said, at last, trembling like a leaf, and speaking in a hoarse, faint voice, "I—steal—*those* notes!"

They showed him the warrant, repeated the values and numbers of the notes, bid him be careful, as what he said would be used as evidence against<sup>him</sup>, when they were interrupted by a cry of exceeding anguish.

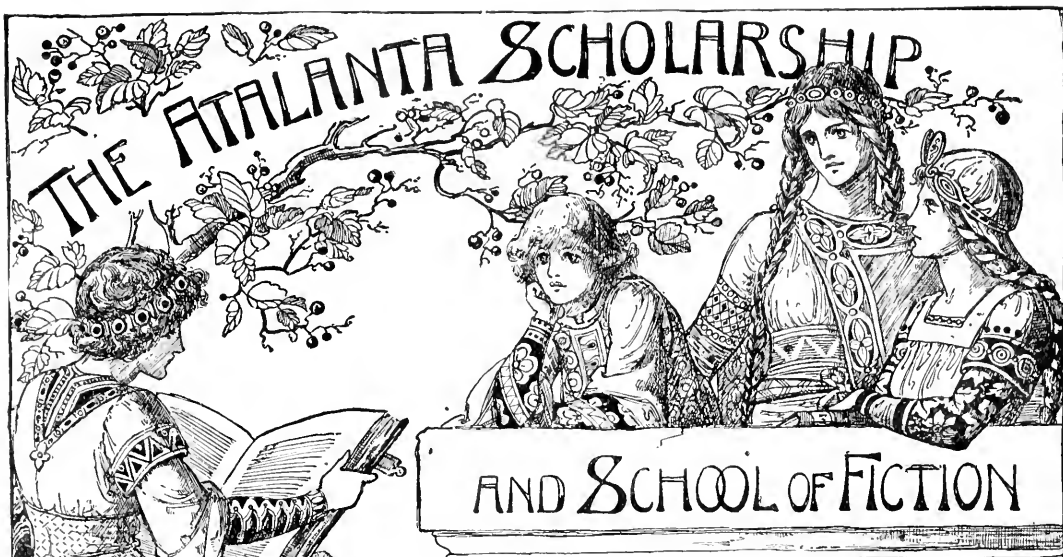
"My sin," he shrieked, "my sin has found me out. It was for Walter! Oh! my God! it was for my stricken child! My sin, my sin!"

George, shuddering, covered his face at the cry. The dull sound of a falling body made him look up, to see the poor curate drop in a heap on the bare-boarded floor.

Someone else saw this distressing sight, someone who had entered softly and unperceived, in time to hear the constable's caution and the terrible cry it evoked. She had thrown a shawl over her head and hastened after her husband on an impulse she could not resist, with a sure presentiment that something had gone wrong. George saw the horror in her stony eyes and grey face, the mute agony in her pale and rigid mouth: it haunted him for weeks.

(To be continued.)





## THE PICTURESQUE NOVEL,

*As represented by R. D. Blackmore.*

BY KATHARINE S. MACQUOID.

THERE seems to be, with a few brilliant exceptions, a decided lack of genial humour

writer, who may be considered from his varied gifts at the head of contemporary novelists, and whose work has the power of a moral and mental tonic for the tired and worried mortals who seek a book as much for refreshment as for keen intellectual enjoyment.

I have called this paper "The Picturesque Novel," because the books of R. D. Blackmore seem to me the best living example of the picturesque in fiction: they are much more than that, for they give a true and artistic presentment of all that constitutes human nature, as it has been, as it is, and will be to the end of time. This writer is undoubtedly of kin to Shakespeare: we are forced to feel that these men, women and children may be simply the creations of the prose poet's brain, but they are, nevertheless, living flesh and blood realities. There is in Mr. Blackmore's books the same atmosphere of sunny leisure that makes so great a charm in "As You Like It." Part of this leisurely effect may be due to the author's practice of telling stories that happened years ago, often in the early part of the century: there were then so few facilities for getting quickly from one place to another, that people had perforce, to stay at home and take the best amuse-

in the novels of the day: there is wit, and broad farce, but little sterling humour: even when humour exists it is often caustic and cynical. It may be that the cause of this want lies in the overbusyness of our generation, and that every one has too much to do; no one has leisure in which to contemplate fully, or fully to enjoy any one thing. We have not a word which expresses my meaning as the French word *savourer* renders it. However, considering the author whose name heads this paper, it may be more in keeping to avoid any French word whatsoever! I do not mean to advocate laziness: the hardest workers often seem the most cheerful of men, and it is certain that a good deal of work can be done without necessitating the friction which seems to weaken both nerves and spirits.

"Good wine needs no bush," and irrespective of the object in view, it would be unnecessary and also presumptuous in me to praise the books of this

ment and variety they could out of their own and their neighbours' hum-drum lives. Who knows? Perhaps they were more contented than we are, and perhaps they took as much real enjoyment out of their quiet and frugal existence. If the books that have come down to us are to be trusted, they certainly seem to have been both more witty and more humorous.

I think humour is a more valuable gift than wit is to a fiction writer, and perhaps no better method for the cultivation of this gift (apart from the study of human nature, the true study on all points for a would-be author) can be found than a thoughtfully made acquaintance with R. D. Blackmore's books—for he must not be skimmed.

The special style in which he writes secures him against imitation: a style which, from its extraordinary qualities, one grows to love; its rich breadth is mossed over with varied erudition as skilfully and artistically engrained in it as is the seasoning of a well made pigeon pie. Whether it be about the habits of human beings, or those of the dumb creation, beasts, birds, fish, or insects; or of the nature of soils, or of tides and atmospheric phenomena, this great seer knows all by a fine instinct: one is always gleaning fresh knowledge from his pages: the effort to teach is nowhere apparent: gems are dropped here and there, like the pearls and diamonds of the fairy tale; there is such evident and thorough culture, that one accepts the wisdom as indisputable.

Yet this very style of his has alienated some commonplace readers, on the ground that they suspected the reality of the story which opened in such an unmodern fashion.

I think imitation of any author a detestable practice: but the warmth of a glowing fire in winter will kindle the spirits, and evoke a livelier style of talk than a shivering man, face to face with a bitter north-easter, could indulge in, unless, indeed, he happened to be Mark Tapley himself: so I believe that a course of such reading as is to be found in the books we are considering will, in a writer who possesses it, stimulate and stir up to emulation the gift of humour, not for the sake of the reputation that may thereby accrue to him, but for the enjoyment of the power itself, and of the boon he can confer on his fellows; for the writer who can make us laugh by his humour is a universal benefactor.

The greater number of readers are as capricious in taste as an invalid is with regard to food: they tire as quickly of the same dish, and for this reason one of the most fascinating of an author's gifts is Variety. I do not mean by this that public taste should be consciously catered for by a writer, but we all know how grateful we are to the novelist who does not repeat him or herself in the facts of scenery and characters. At first sight, Mr. Blackmore may seem to lack this quality of variety, but to the careful student, perhaps no living writer offers so much diversity in his books, both as regards character and scenery.

To begin with the scenery—it is entirely individual, and so intimately associated with the characters of the book, that the same description could not serve as a background to any other story. It is not set forth at the outset as mere padding; we are constantly in it, and some of it is specially woven in with this or that character: for instance, in "Springhaven," we follow Dolly in her walks with a perfect vision of her picturesque surroundings, and we feel how the exquisite maiden, in her "shell-pink gown and her blue sash," harmonises with all that is about her. It is the same with Dan Tugwell, with Parson Twemlow and the others. It is difficult to think of the graceful Maid of Sker, except among her barren rocks and sand-hills (or in Dyo's cottage) she seems out of place, and to be truly the stranger she has become, in her grandfather's grand Devonshire home.

The characters in these stories are so burnt into the pages, that the reader never needs figurative spectacles to know any one of them distinctly, and this is as true of those characters who merely help on the narratives, and throw sidelights, as it were, on their betters, as it is of the chief actors themselves. I do not like that word "actors," for these characters are living people—they have no semblance of playing parts. In "Alice Lorraine" we can see Lady Valeria and the Parson, also the Grower and his wife, just as vividly as we see Hilary, and Mabel, and Alice herself: in "The Maid of Sker" it is the same with dark Evan Thomas, and Heavyside's French wife. This author's power of vision is singularly keen. The distinctness of every character, its consistency to the very end of each story is marvellous; each one is true to itself: you do not feel that it is there to carry on the story: it is an integral portion

of the narrative of human life, which so interests us that, long as some of the books are, we eagerly read on to the end.

Take, for instance, in "The Maid of Sker," "Old Dyo," as he loves to be called. Replete as they are with humour, you sometimes feel a bit weary of his extraordinary side-yarns when they break into a very interesting part of the story, and yet your impatience is only momentary, your critical judgment tells you that without these absurd interruptions, Dyo, who tells the story, would not be himself: Dyo, who lies, who cheats, who poaches and brags, who even consents to be the paid spy of a villain, and yet with whom, at the end of the book, you feel on terms of intimate friendship, though you may not agree with dear old Sir Philip Bamfylde, when he says to Anthony Stew, "Sir, this is a man whom I truly respect. . . I call him a noble specimen of your fellow-countrymen."

But reality is not the only charm of Mr. Blackmore's characters, though many of his books, because of that quality, will probably live through the ages to come, like their fore-runner, "Robinson Crusoe": the great and distinctive charm of this goodly array of stories is their breadth of atmosphere, their richness of colour—in a word, the picturesque setting of their genial humour. I hardly think that the sunny afternoon in the Kentish cherry-orchard, when the Grower and his wife fall asleep, and the young people amuse themselves with the fruit, has ever been surpassed for picturesque truth.

In "Cradock Nowell," again we have exquisite pictures: and above all, in that most delightful story, "Springhaven." There is plenty of picturesque beauty, and truth too, in "Cripps the Carrier," in "Christowel," and in the others. It seems useless to speak of "Lorna Doone," for every one has read it again and again, it has become a household possession; in that book and in "The Maid of Sker," there is humour enough to float a dozen stories, and yet how great a contrast there is between the characters of the two narrators, as they impress themselves on the mind of a reader.

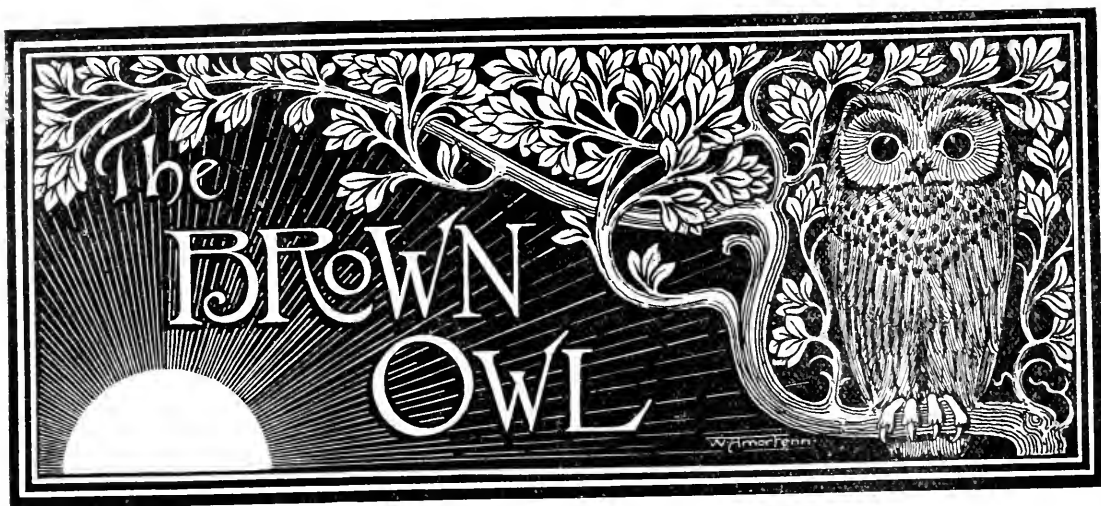
A special feature in Mr. Blackmore's work is one which he shares with Mrs. Oliphant, and it contains a great element of the picturesque: I

mean a seemingly peaceful and innocent presentment of things, which yet hold within them the elements of a direful tragedy, so that sharp and sudden contrasts of effect are inevitable as the story unfolds itself. There are distinct instances of this suppressed volcanic ingredient, both in "Alice Lorraine" and in "Springhaven." This last named book especially illustrates another gift possessed by our author: not only are his characters integral parts of the story, but some of them also, of the times they live in: one seems to know Nelson and the rest of the great personages, just as if one had spoken with them; there is not the feeling that sometimes comes as one reads a historical novel, that these are mere waxwork figures, set for us to gaze at: we are with the great people themselves, we are not at Madame Tussaud's show.

With all my love for Dyo, I entertain a secret hope that his young wife Polly plagued him finely, he deserved punishment from the sex, for his constant sarcasms anent it; well, perhaps our humourist takes this opportunity to hint that too much sugar may create acidity, for by his own account, Dyo was made much of by all the women in the book, except the stony Mrs. Steelyards.

But the gifts which rank highest, as Art, have not always the greatest power of winning a reader's affection. Mr. Blackmore has the great creative gift, both as regards distinction and reality in his characters, and of picturesqueness in the scenery that belongs to them; he is a great and genial humourist, and his humour is both broad and subtle, but he possesses, among many other qualities too numerous to be dealt with in a short notice of this kind, two which are especially endearing—these are, his playful gaiety, and the tenderness of his pathos. A chapter in "Alice Lorraine," called "Not to be resisted," strikingly instances the first of these qualities, and the new story, "Perlycross," now running its course in *Macmillan's Magazine*, besides its humour, already shows some exquisite and most pathetic tenderness; but these features are abundant in this delightful series of stories.

Englishmen and Englishwomen may well be proud of R. D. Blackmore, for he is English to the backbone, and he never tires of singing his country's praises, and of painting her natural beauties, and the special qualities of her people.



## THINGS IN GENERAL.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

IN the midst of all the trouble and distress which seems always to become more intense at this time of the year, partly, no doubt, in comparison with the often fictitious, but very general jollity with which the human race is agreed, by means of one festival or another, to contend against its depressing influence—I am glad to hear one utterance of wisdom, which is better than many speeches on behalf of the poor. This is a certain saying of Mr. Barnett's, a man who is allowed to know what he is speaking about, to the effect that to elevate the masses as masses is an impossible achievement: but to get hold of one man is one man's work, fairly possible, and to be done. I do not recollect the words he used, but this was the meaning—which I take up the more eagerly and joyfully, since it is a principle I have humbly attempted to preach with less authority, and which was the maxim and rule of one to whom I owe my life and anything that is good in it. This lady, an obscure person enough so far as the world goes, but to me one of the most great of human beings, was far from wealthy, and could not at any time contribute much in money to any funds for the poor—nor did she ever, that I know, use that obnoxious word. Her opinion was, that every family like her own, consisting of sons and daughters, fulfilled its duty best by taking charge, so far as was possible, of another family among those who are perennially in want of help. This charge and overseeing was done in the most simple and

natural way. The clothes, for instance, of the children in the better house made a most admirable provision, when they were outgrown or shabby, for the children in the other. Boots could be mended strongly for the use of the poorer, which were not quite smart enough for the richer (heaven knows how far from being rich!) boy. The young lady's morning frock made a best gown for the girl going out to service. The mother's garments, which never looked less than well, whatever their age was, equipped in their later days the other mother. Nothing could be more simple or more entirely practicable than this arrangement. It is a system that could be adopted at once in hundreds of houses, without disturbing any habit, or costing much trouble even.

Then, if the poor father happened to be out of work, which was always a possibility, the other family moved heaven and earth, so far as that was possible, to get him something to do. When the boys and girls were ready to go "out," they were helped to find places, and recommended or even guaranteed with such aid in the matter of outfit as was possible. It is, no doubt, an excellent thing to send bundles of old clothes to an institution, but it is far more interesting to expend them on the people you know, to contrive which will suit John, and which Mary, and to see with your own eyes how well they look in the change and transformation.

I remember distinctly the gradual change

which occurred in a family under the operation of my mother's system. They came under her notice in the most curious circumstances. The wife was a young, strong, wild, good-hearted, undisciplined creature, had got into some terrible scrape through an assault upon another woman who, she had supposed, had taken from her her husband's affections—the husband, a young fellow of a roving disposition, ex-soldier, worker at the docks: often out of work and generally in mischief, but with no particular harm in him. The first needlework which I remember to have done with any pleasure (for my mother loved the needle, and I not at all) was the manufacture of a cotton gown (dark blue with white spots—ladies of my age will remember the kind) to replace the one which had been torn off poor Mary's back in the struggle with her supposed rival. And what fun she was! She was Irish, and full of wit and fancy. When she was in the kitchen—which happened frequently, as she became, in her dire necessity, charwoman and general aid to the household—her high spirits, her jokes, her recollections, her queer sayings were a constant delight. I could tell any one now (and it must be nearly half a century ago) how Mary and a companion in misfortune dined—two poor, young, unauthorised wives following the regiment, in fun and wretchedness. But that, as Mr. Kipling says, is another story. What I meant to tell you was the history of this pair. The husband had got a few days' imprisonment for some share of his in the fray—I do not know what—and came out rather sullen, quite downhearted, and ready for any devilry. He strayed off naturally to that heart-breaking work of the docks—one day in work, another sauntering idle, a prey to every temptation, it being all uncertain whether the occasional day's wages would ever find its way to his wretched little home. The last I can remember of this man was as the most respectable verger of a church, well clothed, well housed, with a family as respectable as himself growing up in all the most excellent ways, and taking to virtue as to their natural element. Mary's fun was naturally subdued in this admirable milieu; but she was a happy woman with her children about her, and owing nothing to any one. I do not believe that any money to speak of had been expended in bringing about this wonderful revolution. It had only been kindness, a steady

individual backing up, a court of appeal in all difficulties, personal aid, encouragement and oversight. There were many intermediate steps, no doubt, some shortcomings and fallings back but this was the conclusion of all.

Now, such a system has this in its favour—that it needs no preparation, and requires very little expenditure. It can be begun any day, and though to be effectual it must be continuous, yet even a little friendship is never thrown away, and nobody need be afraid of an undertaking which, if it lasted no more than a season, would still have a little advantage in it. The great drawback no doubt is, that the miserable are not mingled with the better off, and that those who inhabit the wastes of the east of London would have to go far—a day's journey, perhaps—to appeal to, or to receive comfort from a benefactor at the other end. But there are many regions in this world of London which own no such limitation, and most of us could find quite enough within reach to exercise our full powers without going far afield. In the time of which I have spoken, one thing we had to do was to take care that the children went to school—that care is now taken off our hands.

The worst of charity in these days when it is so universal, is its tremendous organisation. This is perhaps necessary: I can say nothing to the contrary—but it is painful and unnatural. Twice a year, before an election to the benefits of a certain hospital, I receive cards and letters containing details of the most heartrending cases. They are all recommended by a string of often notable and wealthy names, and I feel disposed to ask why cannot these great people, instead of throwing upon the common shoulders the burden of the want they know themselves, provide for the individuals who have the advantage of being known to them? It may be said that they do in some cases, but cannot in all. I wonder is that so? or is it only so much easier to transfer the weight to a society or a hospital? The personal is more and more crowded out by the general in everything, till we run some risk of forgetting that there are duties which cannot be fulfilled by subscription. Supposing there are eight comfortable names to each of these piteous letters, how little would they feel it did they make up among themselves the little pension for which they apply to the

public charity!—and it would leave the more for those who have no friends, or only friends without power to help them. I have no doubt that the stir of speculation and commercial excitement which runs through all the efforts that are made at this time of the year, to quicken liberality and excite the interest of the subscriber, is perhaps a necessary evil. No one can go through the numberless crises and hair-breadth escapes to which every corporation “supported by voluntary contributions” is subject, without falling into the whirl of that effort and strain to get money, on which their life depends. But at all events it is a good thing when we can ease their burdened hands, by that humbler, kinder, more individual way, which existed before all the hospitals. The charity which is twice blessed is not, I fear, the kind which contents itself with subscriptions, and with recommending “proper objects” to the beneficence of the world.

\* \* \*

A curious illustration of a kind of friendly service, now one may say extinct, is to be found in the *Private Letters of Sir Walter Scott*, lately given to the public. It would seem in these as if the first thought of that great man, when he became acquainted with anyone was how he could help him. “I have some influence,” he says. Those were, as commonly imagined, corrupt times. Influence went a long way in filling up all public employments. The sway of the examination had not begun. When a potentate of any description visited a house full of boys, for instance, it was his habit, if he were a generous person, to take the father aside and question him as to his “views” for his sons. Writerships in India, cadetships, appointments of all kinds, came out of these suggestive inquiries. Was the public service any the worse for them? We believe that the public service of our country has always been a thing to be proud of, officered, in a greater degree, by honourable and competent men, than

any other. It will be so, no doubt, under the principle of examinations. The race does not deteriorate because the custom changes, and the majority of public servants is still and will be always chosen from the same class. But that principle certainly has taken away much that was good from the life of parents and children. It is a fact painfully borne in upon many minds now-a-days, that there are quantities of excellent young men, full of vigour and spirit, and far from being without intelligence, who, by the narrow door of examinations, will never enter into the lists of life in which they are better fitted than many of those who do, to fill their posts. Sir Walter would have said modestly, “I have some influence,” and given the push for which not only the boy but his country might have been grateful in common. But this is very old-fashioned and reactionary stuff.

The book gives us a delightful glimpse into Scott's life, of which we are always glad to see more. We find him here, before the tragedy began, in all the fulness of an existence overbrimming with force and happiness and vitality. Though it was only “the torrent's smoothness ere it dash below,” it is well to remember how happy a man he was before his great troubles came. We see him here in his first conception of the Abbotsford he loved, the “cottage” that was to be, his great desires being associated with his plantations, and the growth of the trees which he planted and sowed everywhere, making a bare bank into a delightful woodland. The man with all his noble moderation, his sense, his fun, his genial heart, his constant kindness, comes out as in everything that belongs to him, always finer, larger, and more delightful than before. The book is not so interesting as the Diary which was published full three years ago, and which contained the wonderful tragedy of his life. But it is so far a better publication for those who love books to end well, that there is no disaster in it, and the greater part of it is cheerful as the day.



## The Crown of a Year.

"Is all the glory for the infant year?  
Hast thou no crown that I have earned to wear?  
From out thy tale of woe, a heavy load  
I carry back, along the traversed road.  
Some buds of joy I brought, that Time's caress  
Shall ripen into blooms of loveliness.  
Some thorns of sorrow have I veiled, at last,  
In gossamers (time-woven) of the past."

"Haste! For the New Year Nature breathless waits,  
Straining to hear its chariot at the gates;  
Swift, swift! Old Year! I will not have thee stay,  
I give thee my old self to bear away;  
Cast wholly off, lest soiled feet should stain  
The spotless path God grants me once again.  
I have no crown: but one of hopes and fears,  
That pass with thee, begemmed with fruitless tears."

DOROTHY KEMPE.

## ATALANTA SCHOLARSHIP AND READING UNION.

Describe an imaginary episode of the Monmouth Rebellion. Reply-papers to be sent in by 25th of the month, and not to exceed 500 words.

### ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (DECEMBER).

#### I.

1. Of Cowper, by Hayley. 2. Of Hayley, by Cowper.

#### II.

1. *The Giaour*, by Lord Byron. 2. The celebrated ruby of the Sultan Giamschid, was termed "the torch of night" on account of its resplendent light.

#### III.

1. The nightingale. 2. Keats' *Ode to a Nightingale*.

#### IV.

"And all night long his face before her lived,  
As when a painter poring on a face,  
Divinely through all hindrance finds the man  
Behind it, and so paints him that his face,

The shape and colour of a mind and life,  
Lives for his children, ever at its best  
And fullest ; so the face before her lived,  
Dark-splendid, speaking in the silence, full  
Of noble things, and held her from her sleep."

*Elaine.*

#### V.

1. Edmund Waller. 2. Lady Dorothea Sydney.

#### VI.

1. Ballad of Chevy Chase. 2. Ric. Wytharynton.

#### VII.

Glaucus, in *Endymion*.

## SEARCH QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

#### I.

- Of whom, and by whom, are these lines written?—  
"Not such as erst, by her divine command,  
Her form appeared from Phidias' plastic hand,  
Gone were the terrors of her awful brow,  
Her idle agis bore no Gorgon now."

#### II.

1. What character speaks thus? —  
" — — — Who dares, who dares,  
In purity of manhood stand upright,  
And say, 'This man's a flatterer?' If one be,  
So are they all; for every guise of fortune  
Is smoothed by that below; the learned pate  
Ducks to the golden fool: all is oblique;  
There's nothing level in our cursed natures,  
But direct villany."
2. Give author and work.

#### III.

Where occurs the following description?

"At morn the black-cock trims his jetty wings,  
'Tis morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay,  
All Nature's children feel the matin spring  
Of life reviving, with reviving day."

#### IV.

1. What was the famous prophecy of Merlin concerning English money, and the crowning of the Prince of Wales?
2. When was it fulfilled?

#### V.

1. Who wrote the line? —  
"O Sophonisba! Sophonisba, O!"
2. What was the famous parody of this?

#### VI.

1. Of whom was it said that he wrote like an angel and talked like poor Poll?
2. Who was the author of this remark?

#### VII.

In what poems occur these lines?

"Pleasant it was when woods were green  
And winds were soft and low,"

"And the night shall be filled with music,  
And the cares that infest the day  
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs  
And as silently steal away."







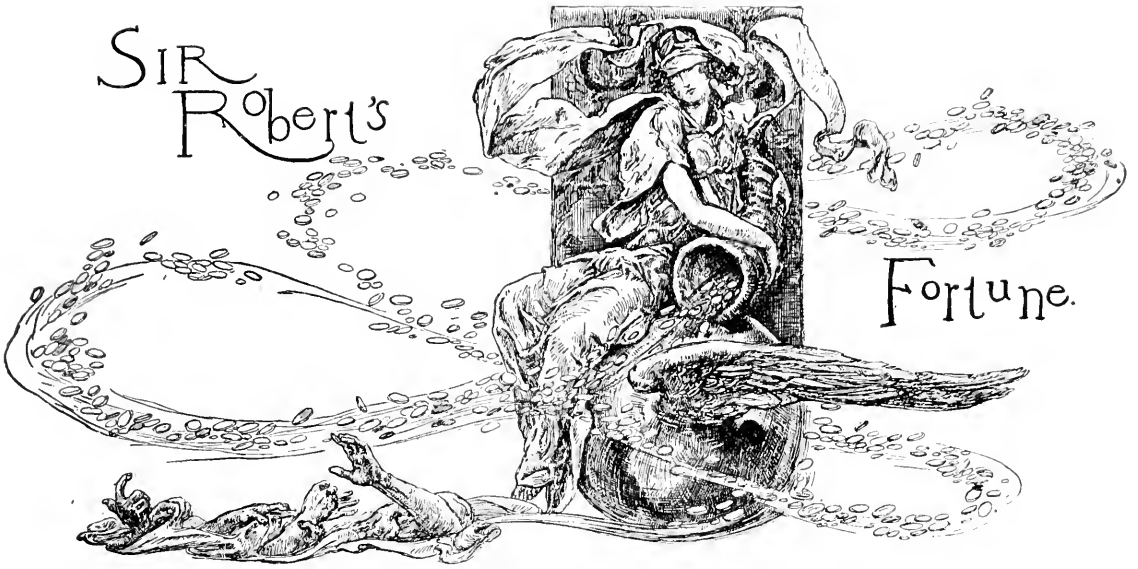
HARMONY.

Poetzberger.

(By permission of the Berlin Photographic Co.)

SIR  
Robert's

Fortune.



BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

PART I.

CHAPTER XVII.

THIS New Year's Eve remained, amid all the experiences of Lily, a thing apart. It became painful to her to think of it in after times: but in the present it was like a completion and climax of life, still all in the visionary stage, yet so close on the verge of the real that she became herself like an instrument, thrilling to every touch, answering every air that blew, every word that was said, in each and all of which there were meanings hidden, of which none were aware but herself. There was the little dinner, first, so carefully prepared by Katrin, so tenderly served by Beenie, the two young people sitting on either side of the table as if at their bridal banquet, while the sound of the festivities going on in the kitchen came up by times when the door was opened: a squeak of the fiddle, the sound of the stamping of the guisards, as they performed their little archaic drama, adding a franker note of laughter to the keen supreme pleasure that reigned above. Beenie went and came, always bringing with her, along with every new dish, that little gust of laughter and voices from below, to which she kept open half an ear, while with the other she attended to what her little mistress said.

"You maun come down, Miss Lily, to do them

a grace: they a' say they'll no steer till they've seen the young leddy; and they're decent lads just come out to play, as the bairns say in their sang, neither beggars nor yet stravaigers, but lads from the town, to please ye with their bit performance; and I ken a' their mothers!" Beenie cried, with a little outburst of affectionate emotion.

When Lily went down accordingly, followed closely by her lover, the little primitive drama was repeated, with more stamping and shouting than ever: and then there was an endless reel, to the sound of the squeaking fiddle, in which Lily danced as long as she could hold out, and Beenie held out as it seemed for ever, wearing out all the lads.

"Eh! I was a grand dancer in my time," she admitted, when she had breath enough, while the fiddle squeaked on and on.

And then, as was right, Ronald said good-night, as the rural band streamed away from the door. The curious group of the guisards, some of them in white shirts outside their garments, some in breastplates of tin, with an iron pot on their heads by way of helmet, "set him home" with much respectful kindness. "But I wuss ye were coming with us to the toun, for Tam the shepherd's is no a howff for a gentleman," they said.

"Any hole will do for me," said Ronald, in the

exhilaration of the evening; and all the house came out of doors to speed the parting guests. The moon shone mistily over the long stretch of the moor, throwing up a sinister gleam here and there from the deep cuttings, and flinging a veil as of gossamer over the great breadth of the country. The air was fresh, not over cold, "saft," as Dougal called it, with the suggestion of rain, and the sudden irruption of voices and steps into the supreme and brooding silence made the strangest effect in the middle of the night. Lily stood watching them as they streamed away, Ronald so distinct from them all, as they streamed down under the shadow of the bank, to show again, chiefly by reason of their disguises, upon the road a little way down. Lily lingered until a speck of white in the distance was all that was visible. She was wrapped in a plaid which Ronald had put round her, drawing the soft green and chequered folds closely around her face, and as warm physically as she was at heart. Now he was himself; he had flung all prudences and fancies to the wind; he had forgotten Sir Robert and his fortune, and every other common thing that could come between. Lily danced up the spiral staircase with a heart that sang still more than her lips did, as she "turned" the tune to which they had been dancing. No one can keep still to whom *Tullochgoram* is sung or played. She danced up the stairs, keeping time faster and faster to the mad melody—the essence unadulterated of reckless fun and drollery.

"Eh, my bonnie leddy!" Beenie cried, who had gone before with the candles; while Katrin stood looking after her, and Dougal locked and bolted the great hall door. Katrin shook her head a little: she was much experienced. "Eh, if he be but wordy of her!" she sighed.

"It's late, late at nicht, and the New Year well begun," said Robina. "Eh, Miss Lily, you'll never forget this New Year?"

"Why should I forget it?" said Lily. "You had better wait till it is past before you say that. But maybe you are right after all, for there never was a Hogmanay like this; and to think that the morn will come, and that it will be no more like the other days than this has been! Beenie, did you ever hear that folk might be as feared for joy as for trouble? or is it only me, that am so timor-some, and cannot tell which it is going to be?"

"'Deed, and I've heard o' that, many's the day. It's just the common way, my bonnie dear. Many a bonnie lassie would fain flee to the ends of the earth the day before her bridal, that is just pleased enough when a's said and done. You mustna lose heart."

"I'm not losing heart," said Lily. "The day before my bridal! Is that what it is? I will just be happy to-night and never think of the morn: for when I begin to think it takes so many things to be satisfied, and I would like to be satisfied just for once, and take no thought."

Robina had a great deal to do in Lily's room that night. She kept moving to and fro, softly opening and shutting drawers and presses, laying away her mistress's things with a care that was scarcely necessary, and meant only restlessness and excitement and an incapacity to keep still. Long before she had done moving about the half-lighted room Lily was fast asleep, her excitement, though presumably greater, not being enough to keep sleep from the eyes which were dazzled with the sudden gleam of something so new and strange in her life, as well as tired with an unusual vigil. Lily slept as soundly as a child till the clear, somewhat shrill daylight, touched with frost, shone upon her late in the wintry morning and called her up much more effectually than the wavering call of Beenie, who was hanging over her in the morning, as she had been at night, the first to meet her eyes.

"Eh, Miss Lily, what a grand sleep ye have had," Beenie cried. She had slept but little herself, her head full of the new situation and all the strange things that might be to come. The house in general had a sense of excitement breathing through it, not visible indeed in Dougal, who was, as usual, wrestling with the powny outside, but very apparent in Katrin, who went about her morning work with an extremely serious face, as if all the cares of the world were on her shoulders. Robina and she had various stolen moments of communication through the day, indeed, which testified to a degree of confidence between them, and a mutual preoccupation.

"I'm no to say a word to her: but how am I to keep my tongue in my head, when Dauvit himself says that when he was musin' the fire burnt!"

"Losh!" cried Katrin, "if it was naething but haudin' your tongue! but what I've to think of is mair than that. Eh, I'm doing that for Miss Lily

I would do for none of my kin, no, nor Dougal himself: and I wish I was just clean out of it, for I'm no fond of secrets: they are uncanny things."

"Eh, woman! ye wouldna betray them?" Beenie cried.

"Betray them? Am I a person to betray what's trusted to me? but I wish there were nae secrets in this world. It's just aye cheating somebody. Ye canna be straichtforward, do what ye will, when ye've got other folks' secrets to keep, let alone them that are your ain."

"I'm no sae particular," said Beenie, with a little toss of her head, "and there will be no stress upon ye for long. It's just the ae step."

"I have my doubts," said Katrin, shaking her head.

"Ye have your doubts? and what doubts would ye have? It will a' be plain when ance it's done. There are nae mair secrets after that! It's just as I said: the ae step. Eh me, I could have likit it far better in Sir Robert's grand house in Moray Place, and a' Edinburgh there, and the Principal himself to join their hands thegither, and my bonnie Miss Lily in the white satin, and the auld lady's grand necklace about her bonnie white neck. But we canna have everything our ain gate. The Manse parlour is just a' that can be desired in the circumstances we're noo in: and when it's done, it will just be done and naething more to say."

But Katrin still shook her head. She was a far-seeing woman. "I'm no just sure we will be out of it sae easy as that," she said.

This talk was not completed at once, but came in on various occasions, a few words here and there, as opportunity secured: and the two women, though both were excited and disturbed, did no doubt enjoy the role of conspirator, more or less, and felt that those secret consultations added a zest to life. Beenie, whose lips were sealed in the presence of her mistress, and Katrin, who had to maintain an aspect of absolute calm in the sight of Dougal, could not but feel a consciousness of superiority, which consoled them for much that was uncomfortable. But, indeed, it was exasperatingly easy to deceive Dougal. He suspected nothing: secrets or mysteries had never come his way. Life meant to him his daily work, his daily parritch, the comfort of a crack now and then with his friends, a glass of toddy on an occasion, and

the prevailing consciousness of being well done for at all times, with a clean hearthstone, and the parritch and the broth both well boiled and appetising, more than fell to the lot of ordinary men. If he had known even that Katrin was keeping a secret from him it is doubtful whether he would have been at all moved. He would have thought it some whigmaleerie of the wife's, and would have remained perfectly easy in his mind, in the conviction that she would tell him if it was anything he had to do with, and if not, wha was minding? Nothing that she did or said roused his curiosity to any great degree. There had need to be something more serious than Dougal to account for the little contraction over Katrin's eyes.

This was, perhaps, more visible, however, after the conversation she had with Mr. Lumsden, on the afternoon of New Year's day. I cannot tell what he said to her, but there was something in it additional to what he had said on the evening before, when he had told her and Beenie what their parts were to be in the little drama for which he had not yet fully prepared the chief actor of all. Lily waited for him at the window with a heart that beat high in her breast on that frosty morning, when all the stretches of the moor were crisp and white, and every little rowan tree and bush of withered heather shone like something of frosted silver, across the grey surface, tinged with a lower tone of whiteness. Lily saw him almost before he had come within the range of mortal vision, so far off that the road itself could not be seen, and only a faint speck that moved was distinguishable in the chill and frozen silence. The speck moved on, disappeared, came out again till it grew into absolute sight and knowledge, near enough to be recognised from the window and hastily met at the door with a sweep of flying feet and hands outstretched. "My bonnie Lily! the only flower that's not frosted," he said. The change that had taken place between them was made plain by this: that he came quite openly to the door, and that Lily flew to meet him. There was no longer any occasion for the supposed accident of meetings on the moor. How this change came about Lily did not stop to enquire. It was; and that was enough, and she was too happy in it ever to wonder what could have been said or done underneath, to make the

lover's appearance now a thing expected, and which it was unnecessary to attempt to conceal.

"It will perhaps be for to-morrow and perhaps for the day after, I am not certain yet," Ronald said.

"What will perhaps be for to-morrow?" Lily cried, with a sudden flush on her cheek.

"We are not going to make any fuss about it, Lily. You promised me you would not desire that. It's very easy to be married in our country. If we were to call Dougal up and Katrin, and say we were man and wife, we would be married just as fast as by all the ministers in the world."

"Ronald!" cried Lily, growing pale.

"I am not suggesting such a thing. Do you think that I would put a scorn on my bonnie Lily with a marriage like that? Not I! What I cannot bear is that you should be stinted of one thing you would like—though, for my part, the less the better, I say, and the most agreeable to me. But no; I am not that kind of man. I like the sanction of the Kirk. I like everything done decently and in order. That is why I say to-morrow or the next day: for I have not yet seen Mr. Blythe."

"And is it to be so soon as that?" said Lily, with awe.

"My darling, what object have we in waiting? The vacation is short enough any way. We must not lose a day. You promised to be ready at a moment's warning. Well, I'm giving you a day's warning. If everything had been right it would have been you to fix the time, and all your fancies consulted; but we're past that, Lily. You know you put yourself into my hands to have it done as soon as was possible."

"Did I?" said Lily, confused; and then she added, "I know. I am not one to make a trouble. It is best to be done when we can—and as soon as we can—and end this dreary life."

"That is what I knew you would say. No certainty, no ground to stand on, and not knowing what might happen at any moment. No, Lily, it is no time for scruples now."

"Still," said Lily, "I would have liked to have heard all your plans and what we are to do. It is fine planning; it is aye a pleasure, even when it comes to nothing. And now, when it must come to something——"

"That's the difference I suppose between man and woman," said Ronald, with a laugh. "I have no thought of anything but one thing. I care nothing about plans. You that are all made up of imagination, you shoot past and begin again. But me: I think only of getting my Lily, of having her for my own. I have neither plots nor plans in my head."

"It is a good thing then that women think of them, for we can't do without them," Lily said. But she was soothed and pleased that her bridegroom should have no thought but for herself. Perhaps this was what was most fit for the man. The woman had the outset to think of, the new house to live in, and everything else that was involved. The reverse thought gives pleasure in other circumstances. There is no consistency in the reasonings of this period of life.

"Let us go out now," said Ronald, "the frost is hard: and it's fine dry walking: we'll get a turn round the moor, and then I will be off to the 'toun' to see the minister, and to-night I'll come back and tell you all about it. Wrap up well, for it's cold, but so bright that it does the heart good. But it is the day itself, and because it is the day, that does the heart most good," he said, once more wrapping Lily up, close round her pretty throat, with the soft, voluminous folds of the plaid. The two faces so close together, the light in her eyes, the contagious happiness in his face, took every shadow from Lily's heart. There had been no shadows, only a faint sort of floating gossamer, which had no meaning, and now it melted all away.

The ramble round the moor filled all the bright noon of the wintry day. It was not possible to wander among the ling bushes, or by the soft, meandering lines of turf. All was crisp with the curling whiteness of the frost, except here and there where a prominent point had been melted and darkened by the sun. They went along the road, which crackled under their feet, with small ice crystals in every fissure. The mountains stood blue in a faint haze that seemed to breathe into the still air, and the moor stretched white, like a piece of crisp embroidery under the shining of the light. How wintry the air was, and how exhilarating, tightening the nerves and stimulating every force! Towards the north the sky was heavy and spoke of snow, but there were soft

## CHAPTER XVIII.

breaks of blue and lines of yellow light in the brighter quarter. They walked now quickly as they faced the wind, now slowly as they turned their backs upon it, and, wrapped in their soft plaids, felt the soft glow and warmth mount to their youthful cheeks. I doubt if any summer ramble, in the sweetest air and among the flowers, was more full of pleasure. They talked to each other incessantly, but perhaps not very much that would bear repeating: yet there was a little veiled conflict certainly going on all the time, scarcely conscious, hidden in innocent questions and suggestions, in innocent seeming evasions. Lily wanted to ask so much, but half feared to put a direct question lest it should be an offence, while he wanted to keep every question at arm's length, but did not dare to do so lest it should excite suspicion. There was an occasional flash of the rapiers, soon covered up in the softest tones and touches, but still they kept their distinct parts: she anxious to see a little beyond, he eager to keep her within the limits of the day. He parried all her thrusts with this pretence, that his thoughts could not stray beyond to-morrow. "Sufficient unto the day is the happiness thereof," he said.

Then they went in and had their mid-day meal together, once more attended by Beenie, with a world of meaning in every glance. "They are just twa bonnie doos crooning on a branch," she said to Katrin as she came downstairs for another dish. "Doos!" cried Katrin, "they have a very good will to their meat, that's a' that I can say." "They are like twa bonnie squirrels in a wood," cried Beenie, at her next dive into the kitchen, "givin' aye a look the one to the ither." "Squirrels, my certy! but I wouldna like to gether the nits for them a' the year through," said Katrin. But when Beenie came back for the pudding, and declared that "they were like twa bonnie fishes side by side in the burn, the ane mair silvery and golden than the other," Katrin's amazement and ridicule, and the excitement underneath, found vent in a shriek, which brought Dougal hurrying in from the barn. "Losh, woman! are ye brunt in the fire, or have ye spilt the boiling pot upon ye, or what have ye done?" "I'll gie you the boiling pot yourself, and a dish-clout to pin to your tail, and that will learn ye to ask fule questions," Katrin said.

RONALD walked into Kinloch-Rugas after the plentiful lunch upon which Katrin had made so many remarks. His head was buzzing and his bosom thrilling with the excitement natural at that period of existence. He loved Lily—as well as he was capable of loving—with all the mingled sentiment and passion, the emotions high and low, the very human and half divine which are involved in that condition of mind. He was a healthy, vigorous, and in no way vicious young man. If he had not the highest ideal, he had not at all the lowered standard of a man whose mind has been debased by evil communications. He was, in his way, a true lover, at the climax of life which is attained by a bridegroom. His thoughts were set to a kind of rhythmic measure of "Lily, Lily," as he walked swiftly and strongly down the long road towards the village. If his mind had been laid bare by a touch of the angel's spear, it would not, I fear, have satisfied Lily, nor any one who loved her: but it sufficiently satisfied himself. He did not want to look beyond the next step which, he had convinced himself, was the right step to take: what was to follow was, he tried to assure himself, in the providence of God; or, if that was too serious (but Ronald was a serious man, willingly conceding to God the right to influence human affairs) it was open to all the developments—chances even, if you like to say so—of natural events. Who could say what would happen on the morrow?—in the meantime, a reasonable man's concern was with the events of the day. And though he was not a highly strung person by nature, he was to-day all lyrical, and thrilling with the emotions of a bridegroom. He was not unworthy of the position. His very foot acknowledged that thrill, and struck the ground in measure, as if the iron strings of frost had been those of a harp. The passer-by, plodding along with head down and nose half sheltered from the cutting wind, took that member half out of the folds of his plaid to see what it was that was so bye-ordinary in the man he met. He did not sound like a common man going into the town on common business, nor look like it when the spectator turned to breathe the softer way of the wind for a moment and look after the stranger. Neither did Ronald feel like any one else in that

wintry afternoon. He was a bridegroom, and the thrill of it was in all his veins.

It was nearly dark when he came in sight of the lights—chiefly twinkling lights in windows, for there was no gas as yet to illuminate every little place as we have it now. In the Manse, with its larger windows, it was still light enough, and the soft yellow and pink of the frosty evening sky lent colour, as well as light, to the calm of the parlour, facing towards the west, where Mr. Blythe sat alone. It was the minister's musing time. Sometimes he had a doze; sometimes he sat by the fire, but with his chair turned to the sunset, and indulged in his own thoughts—these were confessedly, in many cases, his old stories, over which he would go from time to time, with a choke of a laugh in the stillness over this and that: perhaps there were moments in which his musings were more solemn; but of these history bears no record. The Manse parlour had no feature of beauty. It was a very humdrum room: but to the minister it was the abode of comfort and peace. He wanted nothing more than was to be found within its four walls—life was quite bounded to him by these walls, and I think he had no wish for any future that went beyond them. His "Scotsman," which lasted him from one day to another, till the next (bi-weekly) number came in—his books, chiefly volumes of old history, or Reminiscences, sometimes a Scots (occasionally printed Scott's) novel: but that was a rare treat, and not to be calculated upon. A bout of story telling now and then when another clerical brother, or old elder whose memory stretched back to those cheerful, jovial, legendary days, where all the stories come from: these filled up existence happily enough for the old minister. His work was over, and I fear that perhaps he had never put very much of his heart into that—and he had his daughter to serve him "hand and foot," as the maids said. He did not need even to take the trouble of finding his spectacles (which, like most other people, he was always losing) for himself. "Eelen, where's my specs," he said, without moving. Such was this old Scotch Presbyterian and Sybarite—and though a paradise of black haircloth and mahogany does not much commend itself to us now-a-days, I think Mr. Blythe would gladly have compounded for the deprivation of pearly gates and golden streets, could he have secured the permanence of this.

He was very glad to see Ronald, notwithstanding that he had become very anxious to get rid of him during his stay at the Manse. A visitor of any kind was a godsend in the middle of winter, and at this time of the year: and especially a visitor from Edinburgh, with news to tell, and perhaps a fresh story or two of the humours of the courts and the jokes of the judges—things that did not get in even to the "Scotsman." "And what's a' your news, Mr. Lumsden?" he said eagerly. Ronald, who had had many opportunities of understanding the old minister, had come provided with a scrap or two piquant enough to please him—and what with the jokes, and what with the politics, made a very good impression in the first half-hour of his visit. Then came the turn of more personal things.

"Yon was a fine glass of wine, Mr. Lumsden," said the minister, with a slight smack of his lips.

"I am very glad you liked it, sir: it was chosen by one of my friends who is learned in such matters. I would not trust it to a poor judge like myself."

"Better for you, Mr. Lumsden, better for you at your age not to be too good a judge. Look not upon the wine when it is red, says the prophet, which is just when it's best, many persons think. I am strongly of his opinion when your blood's hot in your veins, like the most of you young lads: but when a man begins to go down the hill, and when he's well exercised in moderation, and to use without abusing, then a grand joram of wine like yon makes glad the heart—as is to be found in one rather mysterious scripture—of God and man."

"I hoped it would give you a charitable thought—of one that was rather a *sonner*, as I remember you said, upon your hospitality."

"That was never meant—that was never meant," said the minister, waving his large flabby hands. Ronald had risen from his seat and was now standing by the fire, leaning his arm on the mantel-piece. The slow twilight was waning, and though the daffodil sky still shone in the window, the fire had begun to tell, especially in the shadow of the half-lit room.

"You see, sir," said Ronald, with a leap of his heart into his throat, and of the voice which accompanied it, coming forth with sudden energy—"there was more in that than met the eye."

"Aye, do ye say so?" said Mr. Blythe, also with a quickened throb of curiosity in his voice.



"Miss Ramsay and I—had met in Edinburgh," said Ronald, clearing his throat, "we had seen—a great deal of each other. We had, in short—"

"I always said it—I always said it," said the minister. "I told Eelen the very first night. I've seen much in my day. 'These two are trothplighted,' I said to my daughter, before ye had been in my house a single night."

"I thought it was vain to attempt deceiving your clever eyes," said Ronald; "I told Lily so—but ladies, you know, are never so sure—they think they can conceal things."

"Thrust their heads into the sand like the ostriches, silly things, and think no body can see them!" said the minister. "I know them well—that's just what they all do."

"Well, so it was, at least," said Ronald. "You will not, perhaps, wonder now that I stayed as long as I could—outstaying my welcome, I fear, and wearing out even your hospitality; but it was a question of seeing Lily—without exciting any suspicion—in a natural, easy way."

"I will not say much about that last: for it was more than suspicion on my part."

"Ah, but everybody is not like you—neither your experience nor your powers of observation are common," said Ronald. He paused a moment, to let this compliment sink in, and then resumed. "Mr. Blythe, I will admit to you that Sir Robert is not content, and that—in short, Lily was banished here, to take her away from me."

"I cannot think it a great banishment to be sent to Dalrugas, which is a fine house in its way, though maybe old-fashioned—and servants to be at her call night and day," said the minister, "but you may easily see it from another point of view—proceed, proceed," he added, with another wave of his hand.

"Well, sir, I can but repeat—Sir Robert does not think me rich enough for his niece. She is his only kin; he would like her to marry a rich man: he would sacrifice her, my bonnie Lily, to an old man with a yellow face and bags of money."

"Well, well, that's no so unnatural as you think. I would like my Eelen to have a warm down-sitting if I could help her to it—to go no further than myself."

"I understand that, sir: my Lily is worthy of a prince, if there could be a prince that loved her as well as I do. But it is me she has chosen and

nobody else—and she is not one to change, if she were shut up in Dalrugas Tower all her life."

"Eh, I would not lippen to that," said the minister, "she is but a young thing. Keep you out of the gate, and let her neither hear from you or see you, and her bit heart, at that age, will come round."

"Thank you for the warning, sir," said Ronald, with a laugh that was forced and uncomfortable, "that's what Sir Robert thought, I suppose. But you may believe there is no pleasure to me in thinking so. And besides, it would never happen with Lily, for Lily is true as steel." He paused for a moment, with a little access of feeling. It remained to be seen whether he was true as steel himself—and perhaps he was not quite assured on that point: yet he was capable, so far, of understanding the matter that he was sure of it in Lily, and the conviction expanded his breast with pride and pleasure. He paused with natural sentiment, and partly with the quickening of his breath, to take the full good of that sensation: and then he resumed:

"I am not rich, you will easily understand—we are a lot of sons at home, and my share will not be great. But I have a good profession, and in a few years, so far as I can see, I may be doing with the best. As far as family is concerned, there can be no question between any Ramsay, and my name."

The minister waved his hand soothingly over this contention. It was not to be gainsaid, nor was any comparison of races to be attempted. He said, "In that case, my young friend, if it's but a few years to wait and you will be doing so well—and both young, with plenty of time before ye, so far as I can see ye can well afford to wait."

"I might afford to wait, that am kept to my work, and little enough time to think—but Lily, Mr. Blythe. Here is Lily alone in the wilderness, as she says. I'm forbidden to see her, forbidden to write to her."

"Restrictions which ye have broken in both cases."

"Yes," cried Ronald, "how could we let ourselves be separated—how could I leave her to languish alone? I tried as long as I could. I did not write to her. I did not come near her, but flesh and blood could not bear it. And then when I saw how glad she was to see me, and how her bonnie countenance changed." Here he nearly broke down, his voice trembled, so genuine

and true was his feeling. "We cannot do it," he said, faintly. "and that's all that's to be said. Mr. Blythe, you are the minister, you have the power in your hands—"

"Eh, man! but I'm only the auld minister nowadays," cried the old gentleman, with a sudden outburst of natural bitterness to which he very seldom gave vent. He was delighted to have nothing to do, but did not love his supplanter any more on that account. "Ye must ask nothing from me: go your ways to my assistant and successor, he is your man."

"I will go to nobody but you," cried Ronald, with all the fervour of a temptation resisted. "Mr. Blythe, will you marry Lily to me?"

Mr. Blythe made a long pause. "If ye are rightly cried in the kirk, I have no choice but to marry ye," he said.

"But I want it done at once, and very private—without any crying in the kirk."

"That would be very irregular, Mr. Lumsden."

"I know it would: but not so irregular as calling up Beenie, and Dougal, and Katrin, and saying before them, 'This is my wife.'"

"No," said the minister, "not just so bad as that: but very irregular. Do ye know, young man, I would be subject to censure by the Presbytery, and I canna tell what pains and penalties? And why should I do such a thing, to save you a month or two, or a year or two's waiting?—that is nothing, nothing at your age."

"It is a great deal when people are in our circumstances," cried Ronald. "Lily so lonely, not a creature near her, no pleasure in her life—no certainty about anything: for Sir Robert might hear I had been seen about, and might just sweep her away—abroad, to the ends of the earth. You say she would forget, but she does not want to forget, nor do I, you may be sure—whereas, if you will just do this for us, you will make us both sure of each other for ever, and I can never be taken from her, nor she from me."

"Young man," said the minister impressively, "I got my kirk from the Ramsays: they're patrons o' this parish, and I was a young man with little influence. I was tutor to Mr. James, but I had little chance of anything grander than a parish school, where I might have just flourished as a stickit minister all my days—and it was the Ramsays that made me a placed minister, and set me

above them a': that was the old laird before Sir Robert's days. But Sir Robert has been very ceevil the times he has been here. He has asked me whiles to my dinner, and other whiles he has sent me just as many grouse and pairicks as I could set my face to. Would it be a just return, think ye, to marry away his bonnie niece to a landless lad as ye confess ye are, with nothing but fees at the best, and not too many of them coming in!"

"Mr. Blythe," cried Ronald, "if it was Mr. James you were tutor to, it is to Mr. James you owe all this—and Mr. James, had he been living, would never have gone against the happiness of his only child."

"Eh! but who can tell that?" cried the minister, "little was he thinking of that or of any kind of child. He was a young fellow, maybe as heedless, maybe more than ye are yourself. Na, there was no thought, neither of wife nor bairn in his head."

"But," cried Ronald, "you must feel you have a double duty to one that is his child and his only one, little as he knew of it at the time."

"A double duty: and what is that?" said the minister, shaking his head—"the duty to keep her from any rash step, puir young unfriended thing—or to let her work out her silly will which, maybe, in a year's time she would rather have put her hand in the fire than have done."

"You give a bonnie character of me," Ronald said, with a harsh laugh.

"I am giving no character of you. I am thinking nothing of you. I am thinking of the bit lassie. It is her I am bound to protect, both for her father's sake and her own. Most marriages that are made in haste are, as the proverb says, repented of at leisure. She might be heart-grieved at me that helped her to her will to-day, when she knows more of life and what it means. Na, na, my young friend, take you your time and wait. Waiting is aye a salutary process. It brings out many a hidden virtue—it consolidates the character—and if you are diligent in your business, it brings ye your reward, which ye enjoy more than if you had snatched it before your time."

"I tell you, minister," cried Ronald, "that we cannot wait—that it's a matter of life and death to us, both to Lily and me."

"What is that you are saying? I am hoping there is no meaning in it, but only words," the old man said sharply, in an altered tone.

The room had grown almost quite dark, the daffodil colour had all faded away, and the heavy curtain of the coming snow was stretching over the last faint streak of light. The fire was smouldering and added little to the room, which lay in a ruddy dark, warmed rather than lighted up. Ronald stood with his elbow on the mantel-piece close to the old minister, whose face had been suddenly raised towards him with an expression of keen command and alarm. And who can tell what devil had stolen in with the dark to put words of shame into the mouth of the young man who had come down the frosty moorland road like a song of joy and youth? It was rapid as a dart. He stooped down and said something in the old minister's ear.

The shameful lie! the shameful, shameful lie! The temptation, the fall, was so instantaneous, that Ronald himself was scarcely conscious of it, or of what he had done in his haste. The old gentleman uttered into the darkness a sort of moan. And then he spoke briefly and sharply, with a keen tone of scorn in his words, which stung his companion even through the confusion of the time.

"If that's so, ye're a disgraceful blackguard; but it's not my part to speak. Be here at this house the morn, with her and your witnesses—I insist upon the witnesses, two of them, to sign the lines. I will send Eelen out of the way. Come before it's dark as ye came to-day—I am always alone at this hour. That's enough, man, I hope. What are you wanting more?"

"I want only to say that you judge me very hastily, Mr. Blythe."

"It's a case in which least said is soonest mended," said the minister. "To-morrow—just before the darkening—and, thank the Lord, there need not be another word said between you and me."

## CHAPTER XIX.

RONALD started back on his way to Dalrugas in the beginning of the wintry night in a condition very different from that in which he came. His head was dazed and swimming; something had happened to him; he had taken a step such as he had never contemplated taking—a step which, did Lily ever know or suspect it, would, he knew, open such a gulf between them as nothing could ever bridge over. He was in a hundred minds to turn

back, to confess his sin before he had passed the last house in the village. We do not call that a temptation when we are impelled to do right, but it is the same thing, only the temptations to do right are somehow less potent than those to do wrong. He was torn by a strong impulse to go back and remedy what he had done: the temptation to commit that fault had been momentary, but overwhelming—the temptation to go back and confess was continuous, but evidently feeble, for he went straight on through all its tuggings, and did not walk more slowly. But yet it would have done him much good and probably no harm had he done so: the minister would have forgiven a fault so soon repented of: he would probably, in the natural feeling towards a penitent sinner, have acceded to his wishes all the same. These thoughts went through Ronald's head without ever stopping his steady and quick walk into the dark. He repented if that had been enough in sackcloth and ashes—he was so deeply ashamed of what he had done that he felt his countenance flame in the darkness where nobody could by any possibility see. But he did not turn back. And presently by repetition the impulse weakened a little, his brain cleared and the world became steady once again. The thing was done; it could not be undone. There was no possibility that Lily should ever hear of it; nobody would ever know of it but old Blythe and himself: and old Blythe would die. It would be a recollection which, in the depth of the night, in moments of solitude, or when awakened by a sudden touch of the past, would go on stinging him like a serpent all the days of his life: but it would be otherwise innocuous. Lily would never hear of it—that was the great thing; there was no chance that she could ever hear. The old minister's lips were sealed. It would be contrary to every rule of honour if he were to betray what had been said to him. Ronald said to himself that he must accept the stinging of that recollection, which he would never get rid of all his life, as his punishment: but no one else would suffer, Lily least of all.

These feelings were hot and strong in his mind as he set out: but a walk of four miles against a cold wind, and with the snow threatening to come down every moment, is a very good thing for dispersing troublous thoughts: they gradually blew away as he went on, and the bridegroom's

state of triumph and rapture came back—dimly at first, and as if he dared not indulge it, but gaining strength every moment, until, before he reached Dalrugas, from the first moment when he saw his love's light in her window shining far over the moor, it came back in full force, driving everything else away. He saw, first, the little star of light hanging midway between earth and sky, and then the shape of the window, and then Lily's figure or shadow coming from time to time to look out; and no lover's heart could have risen higher or beat more warmly. He entirely forgot how he had wronged her in the glory of having her, of knowing her to be there waiting for him, and that she would be his wife to-morrow. She came to the top of the stairs to meet him, while he rushed up three steps at a time, rubbing against the narrow spiral of the stair with such passion and force of feeling as the best man in the world could not have surpassed. One does not require, it is evident, to be the best man in the world, or even a true man at all, to love truly and fervently, and with all the force of one's being. One might say that it was selfishness on Ronald's part to appropriate at any cost the girl he loved: but the fact remained—a fact far deeper than any explanation—that he did love her as deeply, as warmly, as sincerely as any man could. Their meeting was a moment of joy to both—like a poem, like a song, their hearts beat as high as if it had been a first meeting after years of absence, and yet it would have been less complete had they been parted for more than the two or three hours, which was its real period. I need not go any further into this record. It did not matter what they said—words are of little account at such moments. It is only to note that a man who had just told a disgraceful lie, and put upon his bride a stigma of the most false and cruel kind, and whose mind was already shaping thoughts which were destined to work her woe, was, at the moment when he met her with the news that their marriage was to take place next day, as much, as tenderly, in love with her as heart could desire. The problem is one which I have no power to explain.

Next day being still one of the Daft days, bright with the reflection of the new year, and the day of the weekly market in Kinloch-Rugas, Katrin announced early her intention of going in to the town in the course of the day, an expedition which

Beenie, with much modesty and reference to Miss Lily, proposed to share. "I havena been in the town, no to say in the town, ither than at the kirk, which is a different thing—since I came to Dalrugas. I'll maybe get ye a fairing, laddie, for the sake of the new year——"

"If he gangs very canny with the powny, and tak's care of a' our bundles," Katrin said.

"And me, I'm to be left my lane, to keep the hoose," said Dougal, "like Joan Tamson's man."

"Weel," said Katrin, "ye're in there, mony a day and me at hame; it would be a funny thing if I couldna gang to the market once at the new year."

"I'm saying nothing against you and your market. And here's Miss Lily away to her tea at the Manse, and maun have Rory no less to drive her in the geeg with that lad from Edinburgh. I wish there was less of that lad from Edinburgh; he's nae ways agreeable to me."

"Losh, man: it's no you he's running after," cried Katrin, "nor me neither. But he's a fine lad for all that."

"Fine or foul, I would like to see the back of him," said Dougal: and the women in their guilty consciences trembled. They had both been brought to Ronald's side. Both of them had a soft heart for true love, and the fact of stealing a march upon Sir Robert was as pleasant to Katrin as if she had been ten times his housekeeper. The house was full of subdued excitement, hidden words exchanged between the women on the stairs and in dark corners, as if they were conspirators or lovers. "Has he any suspicion, do ye think?" Beenie whispered in Katrin's ear. "Him!" cried Katrin, "if it was put under his nose in black and white, he would bring it to me to spell it out till him." "Eh, but sometimes these simple folks discern a thing when others that are wiser see nothing." "Wha said my man was simple? There's no a simple bit about him: but he knows I'm a woman to be trusted, and he'll no gang a step without Katrin." It was not, perhaps, a moment when an anxious inquirer could feel this trust justified. "Eh, Katrin," cried Robina, "tell me just what's the worst that could happen to them if it was found out." "The worst is just that he would have to take his bride away, Beenie." "Eh! she would no be minding! That's just what she wants most." "And lose her uncle's siller," Katrin added, with a deeper gravity of

tone. "That wouldna trouble her either," said Beenie, shaking her head as over a weakness of her mistress, which she could not deny. "But I am feared, feared," said Katrin, solemnly, with that repetition which makes an utterance emphatic, "that it would be a sore trouble to him." "Any way, its a' settled now, and we'll have to stick to them," said Beenie, doubtfully. "Oh, I'll stick to them—as long as I can stand," Katrin said, with vigour: and this was the last word.

It was clear enough that something was going to take place at the tower of Dalrugus on that Thursday: but this was sufficiently accounted for by the fact that Katrin was going to the market, a thing that did not happen above twice or thrice a year. There were a great many arrangements to make, and the black pony had begun his toilet, and the little cart had been scrubbed and brushed before the sun was well up in the sky—to receive the two substantial forms which, on their side, were arrayed in their best gowns before the early dinner to which they sat down, each with her heart in her mouth in all the excitement of the ripe conspiracy. Only an hour or two now, and the signal would be given, the cord would be pulled, and the great scene would open upon them. "Will you and me ever forget this day, Katrin?" Beenie gasped, unable to control herself. Katrin gave her a push with her shoulder, and took her own place soberly at the board to dispense the dinner as usual. "There's an awfu' fine piece of beef in the pot," she said, "ower good for the like of us: but it'll mind ye, Dougal, of the day ye keepit the house, and I gæd to the toun."

"It's no the first day I've keepit the house, and ye been the one to gang to the toun."

"No, maybe, ye've done it four times since you and me were marriet. If ye ever got better broth than thae broth, its no me that made them. They're that well boiled they just melt in your mouth, with goodness, with a piece of meat in them fit for the laird's table. Have ye taken up some of my broth, Beenie, to the young lady and her friend up the stair?"

"You're no taking much of them yourself," said Dougal, "nor Beenie either. Bless the women, your heads are just turned with the grand ploy o' going to the market. Me, I gang to the market and say naething about it, nor ever lose a bite of a bannock on that account. But you're queer

creatures—no to be faddomed by man. Are ye going to spend a lot o' siller that ye're in siccan a state? Beenie now she'll be wanting a new gown."

"If ye think that I, that am used to a' the grand shops in Edinburgh, would buy a gown at Kinloch-Rugas!—"

"Oh, when ye can get nae better, its aye grand to tak what ye can get," said Dougal. "As for Katrin, I canna tell what's come over her. Her hand's shaking——"

"My hand's no shakin'!" cried Katrin, vehemently. "I'm just as steady as any person. But I've been awfu' busy this mornin' putting everything in order, and I've very little appetite. I'm no a great eater at any time."

"Nor me," said Beenie, "and I'm tired too. I've just been turning over and over Miss Lily's things."

"Ye had very little to do," said Katrin, representing the adoption of her own argument. "Miss Lily's things could easy wait. Sup up your broth, and dinna keep us all waiting. Sandy, here's a grand slice for you. It's seldom you've tasted the like of that. And as soon as you're done, laddie, hurry and put in the pony, for we must have a good sight o' the market, Beenie and me, before it gets dark."

Dougal came out to the door to see them off, with his bonnet hanging upon the side of his head by a hair. He felt the presence of something in the atmosphere for which he could not account. What was it? It was some "ploy" among the women, probably not worth a man's trouble to inquire into. And, as soon as they were off, he had Rory to put in, and await the pleasure of "thae twa" upstairs. He could not refuse Lily anything, nor indeed had he any right to refuse to Sir Robert's niece the use of Rory, on whom she had already ridden about so often. But the lad from Edinburgh was a trial to Dougal. He had an uneasy feeling that it would not please his master to hear of this visitor, and that a strange man about the house was not to be desired. "If it had but been a lassie," he said, in that case he would have been glad that Miss Lily had some company to amuse her; but a gentleman, and a gentleman too that was a stranger, not even of the same county—a lawyer lad from the Parliament house. He did not willingly trust a long leggit loon like that to drive Rory. He was mair fit to

carry Rory than Rory to carry him. So that Dougal's countenance was entirely overcast.

There had been some snow in the morning, a sprinkling just enough to cover the ground more softly and deeply than the hoar frost, but that was but preliminary, there was a great deal more to come. Dougal stood when the pony was ready, pushing his cap from side to side and staring at the sky. "Ye'll do weel to bide but very short time, Miss Lily," he said, "the tea at the Manse is, maybe, very good : but the snow will be coming down in handfu's before you get hame."

"We shall not stay long, Dougal, I promise you," Lily said. There was a tremble in her voice as there had been in Katrin's, and in Robina's. "The women are all clean gyte," Dougal said to himself. He watched them go away, criticising bitterly the pose of Ronald as he drove. "A man with thae long legs has no mortal need for a pony," he said, "they're just a yard longer than they ought to be. I'm about the figure of a man, or just a thought too tall, for driving a sensitive beast like our Rory. Puir beast, but he has come to base uses," said Dougal. I don't know where he had picked up this phrase, but he was pleased with it, and repeated it chuckling to himself.

That evening, just before the darkening, when once more the sunset sky was flushed with all kinds of colour, and shone in graduated tints of rose-pink, darkening to crimson, and blue melting into green, through the Manse window, one homely figure after another stole into the Manse parlour. Katrin had brought the minister a dozen of her own fresh eggs, and what could he do less than call her in and say, "How is a' with ye?" at new year's time, when everybody had a word of good wishes to say? "And this is Robina," he added, with a touch of reserve and severity in his tone. Beenie could not understand how to her—always so regular at the kirk and known for a weel living woman—the minister should be severe : but it was easy to understand that on such an occasion he had a great deal on his mind. There was a chair at either end of the great sofa that stood against the wall : for in these days furniture was arranged symmetrically, and it was not permitted that anything should be without its proper balance. The two women placed themselves there modestly one at each end : the great arms of the sofa half hid them in the slowly growing twilight. Katrin, who

was nearest the door, was blotted out altogether. Beenie, who was at the end nearest the window, showed like a shadow against the light.

And then there was a pause : it was a very solemn pause indeed, like the silence in church. The minister sat in his big chair in the darkest part of the room, with the red glow of a low fire just marking that there was something there, but not a word, not a movement disturbing the dark. The room after a while seemed to turn round to the two watchers, it was so motionless. When Mr. Blythe drew a long breath, a sort of suppressed scream came from both of them. Was it rather a death than a marriage they had come to witness? They had never seen any living thing so still, and the awe of the old man's presence was overwhelming enough in itself.

"What's the matter with you," he said, almost roughly. "Can I not draw my breath in my own house?"

"Oh, sir, I beg your pardon," cried Katrin, thankful to recover her voice. "It was just so awfu' quiet, and we're no used to that. In our bit houses there's nobody but says whatever comes into his head, and we're awfu' steering folk up at Dalrugas Tower."

"Just in the way o' kindness, and giving back an answer when you're spoken to," said Beenie, deferentially, in her soft, half-apologetic voice. It was a great comfort to them in the circumstance, which was very unusual and full of responsibility, to hear themselves speak.

"Ye must just try and possess your souls in patience till ye get back again," the minister said, out of his dark corner. It was just a grand lesson, both thought, and the kind of thing that the minister ought to say. And the silence fell again with a slow diminution of the light, and gradual fading of the yellow sky. To sit there without moving, without breathing, with always the consciousness of the minister unseen, fixing a penetrating look upon them, which probably showed him, so clever a man, the very recesses of their hearts, became moment by moment more than Katrin or Robina could bear.

"The young fools : I'll throw it all up if they dinna put in an appearance before that clock strikes," cried Mr. Blythe at last. "Look out of the window, one of you women, and see if ye can see them."

"There's nothing, minister, nothing, but a wheen country carts going from the market," said Beenie, in the rôle of Sister Anne.

"The idiots!" said Mr. Blythe again, with that force of language peculiar to his country. "Not for their ain purposes, and them all but unlawful, can they keep their time."

"Oh, sir, ye mustna be hard upon them at siccan a moment!" cried Katrin, rocking herself to and fro in anxiety.

"Eh, but I see the powny!" cried Beenie, from the window, "there's a wee laddie holding Rory. And will I run and open the door no to disturb Marget in the kitchen?" she said, not waiting for an answer. The spell of the quiet had so gained upon Robina, and the still rising tide of excitement, that she swept almost noiselessly into the narrow hall, and opened the door mysteriously to the two other shadows who stole in, as it seemed, out of the yellow light that filled up the doorway behind into a darkness which, turning from that wistful illumination, seemed complete.

## CHAPTER XX.

It was all like a dream, a scene without light or sound, shadows moving in the faint twilight, at first not a word said. Beenie remained at the door, holding the handle to guard the entrance. Katrin had risen up too, and stood against the wall, trembling very much but not betraying it in this faint light. These two were in the light side of the room, the half made visible by the window with its fading sunset glimmer. The other two passed into the darker side and were all but lost to sight. A sudden flicker of the fire caught the colour of Lily's dress and revealed her outline for the moment. She had taken off her hat, not knowing why, and the soft beaver with its feather was hanging down by her side in her hand. Katrin made a step forward and relieved her of it, trembling lest some dreadful voice should come to her ears out of the darkness, though not seeing the minister's eyes which shot upon her a fiery glance. Then he broke that strange haunted silence in which so many thoughts and passions were hidden, by his voice suddenly rising harsh, sounding as if it were loud: it was not at all loud, it was indeed a soft voice on ordinary occasions, only in the circumstances and

in the intense quiet it had a strange tone. To Ronald it sounded menacing, to Lily only half alarming, as she knew no reason why it should be less kind than usual; the women were so awe-stricken already that to them it was as the voice of fate. The brief little ceremony was as simple as could be conceived. The troth was not given as in other rites by the individuals themselves, but simply said by the old minister's deepening voice, which he was at pains to subdue after the shock of the first words, and assented to by the bride and bridegroom, Lily, to the half horror of the two women, who gripped each other wildly in their excitement at the sound, giving an audible murmur of assent, while Ronald bowed, which was the usual form. "Von'll be the English way," Katrin whispered to Beenie. "Oh whisht, whisht," said the other. And then in the darkness there ensued a few rolling words of prayer, the long vowels solemnly drawn out, the long words following each other slowly and with a certain grandeur of diction in their absolute simplicity—and the formula common to all—"Whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder." And then there was a little stir in the darkness and all was over.

"But there's just this to say to you, young man," came out of the gloom from the old voice, quavering a little with feeling or fatigue, "forasmuch as ye have been wanting before, so much the more are ye pledged now to be all a man ought to be to this young creature that has trusted herself to you. If ever I hear an ill word of your conduct or your care, and me living, you will have one to answer to that will have it in his power to do you an ill turn, and will not refrain. Mind you this: if I am in the land of the living, and know of any hairm to this poor lassie *I will not refrain*: and ye know what I mean, and that I am one that will do what I say."

"If you think I require to be frightened into loving and cherishing my bonnie wife!" said Ronald confused and alarmed, but attempting to take a high tone.

"Oh Mr. Blythe!" cried Lily, "how little you know!" She could speak in the dark where no one could see, though the light would have reduced her to silence and blushes. She put her hand with a pretty gesture within Ronald's arm.

"I, maybe, know more than I'm thought to do," he said gruffly: "light that candle that you'll find on the mantel-piece, and let us get our work done." The candle brought suddenly to light the confused scene, all the party standing except the figure of the minister, large and shapeless in his big chair. And there was a moment of commotion, while one by one they signed the necessary papers, the young pair quickly, the women with a grotesqueness of awe and difficulty which might have transferred the whole scene at once to the regions of the burlesque. Both to Katrin and Robina it was a very solemn business, slowly accomplished with much contortion both of countenance and figure. "Women, can ye not dispatch?" Mr. Blythe said sternly. "My daughter may be here any minute, the time of my supposed rest is over, and this sedurunt should be over too. Marget will be in from the kitchen with the lamp."

"Oh, Beenie, be quick, quick!" murmured Lily. She had feared to be entreated with the constant hospitality of the Manse to wait until Helen came, and to take tea. It gave her a curious wound to feel that this was not likely to be the case, even though she was most anxious to escape. She was indeed a little frightened for Marget and the lamp, and for Helen and the tea; but it hurt her that the minister who had just made her Ronald's wife should have any hesitation. Feelings are not generally so fine in rural places. A bride is one to be eagerly embraced, not kept out of sight. Though, indeed, she did not want to see Helen or any one, she said almost indignantly to herself.

"And now there are your lines, Mistress Lumsden," the minister said. "Keep them safe and never let them out of your own hands, and I wish ye all that is good. If it's been a hasty step or an unconsidered, it's you that will probably have to bear the wyte of it. I will not deceive you with smooth things: but if there has been error at the beginning——"

"Excuse me," said Ronald in a low fierce voice, "but there is snow in the sky, and it's already dark, and I must take my wife away."

"Don't you interrupt me," said the old minister, "or I will, maybe, say more than I meant to say. If there's been error at the beginning, my poor lassie, take you care to be all the more heedful in time to come. Do nothing ye cannot acknowledge

in the face of day. And God bless you, and keep you, and lift up the light of His countenance upon you," he said, lifting up his arms. The familiar action, the familiar words, subdued all the group in a moment. He had not meant with these words to bless the bride that had been brought before him as poor Lily had been—but it had been drawn from him phrase by phrase.

And then the door opened, and Lily found herself once more outside in the keen air touched with the foretaste of snow which is so distinct in the north. The sky was heavy with it, for half the circle from north to south, but in the west was something of that golden radiance still and a clear blueness above, and one or two stars sparkling through the frost. She lifted her eyes to these with relief, with a feeling of consolation. Was that the light of His countenance that was to shine upon her? But below all things were dark and dreary. To the hurry of excitement which had possessed her before, something vexing, troublous, had come in. She had wished, and was eager to hurry away, to escape Helen—but why had she been hurried away, made to perceive that she was not intended to see Helen? It was more fantastic than could be put into words. And Ronald too was in so great a hurry, eager to get her beyond the observation of the people coming from the market, almost to hide her in a sheltered corner, while he himself went to get the pony. "Nobody will see you here," he said. She wished that nobody should see her, but yet an uncalled for tear came to Lily's eyes as she stood and waited. It looked almost as if it was a path into heaven, the narrow way which was spoken of in the Bible, that strip of golden light with the stars shining above. But it was not to heaven she wanted to go, in the joy of her espousals, on her wedding day. She wanted the life that was before her: the human, the natural, the life that other women had: to be taken to the home her husband had made for her, to be free of the bonds of her girlhood, and the loneliness of her previous days. But Lily did not know, not even a step of the path before her. It rushed upon her now that he had never said a word, never one definite word. She did not know what was going to happen to-morrow. To-night it was too late, certainly too late to go further than Dalrugus—but to-morrow. She remembered now suddenly,



clearly, that to all her questions and imaginations what they were to do, he had never made one distinct reply. He had allowed her to talk and to imagine what was going to be, but he had said not a word. There seemed nothing, nothing clear in all the world but that one golden path leading up into the sky. "Lift up the light of His countenance upon you." That did not mean, Lily thought, half pagan as the youthful thinker so often is, the blessing that is life and joy, but rather that which is consolation and calm. And it was not consolation or calm she wanted, but happiness and delight. She wanted to be able to go out upon the world with her arm in her husband's and her head high, and to shape her new life as other young women did, a separate thing, a new thing, individual to themselves, not any repetition or going back. Standing there in the dark corner, hidden till he could find the pony and take her up secretly out of sight, hurrying away not to be seen by anyone—Lily's heart revolted at these precautions, even though it had been to a certain extent her own desire they should be taken. But oh! it was so different her own desire! that was only the bridal instinct to hide its shy happiness, its tremor of novelty and wonder. It was not concealment she had wanted, but withdrawal from the gaze of the crowd: but it was concealment that was in Ronald's thought, a thing always shameful, not modest, not maidenly, but an expedient of guilt.

Perhaps Ronald was just a little too long getting the pony: but he was not very long. He had her safely in the little geeg, with all her wraps carefully round her, before fifteen minutes had passed: but fifteen minutes in some circumstances are more than as many hours in others. Lily was very silent at first, and he had hard ado to rouse her from the reflections that had seized upon her. "What are we going to do?" she said, out of the heaviness of these reflections, when all that found its way to his lips was the babble of love at its climax. Was it that she loved him less than he loved her? He whispered this in her ear, with one arm holding her close, while Rory made his way vigorously along the road, scenting his stable, and also the snow that was coming. Lily made no answer to the suggestion. Certainly that murmur of love did not seem to satisfy her. She was overcome by it now and then, and sat silent,

feeling the pressure of his arm, and the consciousness that there was nobody but him and herself in the world, with the seductive bewilderment of emotion shared and intensified—yet from time to time awoke sharply to feel the force over again of that question, "What are we going to do?" Oh, why had she not insisted on an answer to it before? The night grew darker, the snow began to fall in large flakes. They were more and more isolated from the world which was invisible round them, nothing but Rory tossing his shaggy ears and snorting at the snow that melted into his nostrils. By the time they reached the Tower, discovering vaguely, all at once, the glimmer of the lights and the voice of Dougal calling to the pony to moderate the impatience of his delight at sight of his own stable, they were so covered with snow that it was difficult for Lily to shake herself clear of it as she stumbled down at the great door. "Bide a moment, bide a moment; just take the plaid off her bodily. It's mair snaw than plaiden," cried Dougal. "Ye little deevil, stand still, will ye? Ye'll get neither bite nor sup till your time comes. Have ye no seen the ithers on the road? Silly taupies to bide so long, and maybe be stormsted in the end."

"They're on the road, Dougal," cried Lily, with humility, remembering that she had never once thought of Katrin and Beenie. "I am sure they're on the road."

"They had better be that," he said, angrily. "What keepit them, I'm asking. Sir, if ye'll be advised by me, ye'll just bid good-bye to the young leddy and make your way to Tam's, as fast as ye can, for every half hour will make it waur. It's on for a night and a day, or I have nae knowledge of the weather."

"Half-an-hour can't make much difference, Dougal," said Ronald, with a laugh.

"Oh, can it no? It's easy to see ye ken little of our moor. And the e'en will be as black as midnicht, and the snaw bewildering, so that ye'll just turn round and round about, and likely lie down in a whin bush, and never wake more."

A half shriek came from Lily in the doorway, while Ronald's laugh rang out into the night. "It will be no worse in half-an-hour," he said.

"Ay, will it? There's a wee bit light in the west the noo, but there will be nane then. Heigh! is't you? Weel, that's aye something," Dougal

said, as the other little vehicle, with its weight of snow-covered figures came suddenly into the light ; and in the bustle of the second arrival, which was much more complicated than the first, nothing more was said. Katrin and Beenie had shaken off the awe of their conspiracy. They were full of spirits and laughter, and their little cart crowded with parcels of every kind. They had found time to buy half the market, as Dougal said, and they occupied him so completely with their talk, and the bustle of getting them and their cargo safely deposited indoors, that the young couple stole upstairs unnoticed. "Tam may whistle for me to-night," Ronald said, "and Dougal growl till he's tired, and the snow fall as much as it pleases. I'm safe of my shelter, Lily. A friend in court is worth many a year's fee."

"Who is your friend in court ?" she said, shivering a little. The cold and the agitation had been a little too much for Lily. Her teeth chattered, the light swam in her eyes.

It was Katrin who was the Providence of the young people. She it was who ordained, peremptorily not letting Dougal say a word, that to send Mr. Lumsden off to Tam's cottage on such a night was such a thing as had never been heard of

"I wouldna turn out a dog," she cried, "to find its way, poor beast, across the moor."

"I warned the lad," said Dougal, "I tell'd him every half hour would make it waur. It is his ain fault if he is late. What have you and me to do harbouring a' the young callants in the country—or out of it—that may come here after Miss Lily? You've just got some nonsense about true love in your head."

"Am I the person," said Katrin, "to have true love cast in my face, me that have been married upon you, Dougal, these thirty year? Na, na ! I'm no that kind of woman : but I have peety in my heart, and there's a dozen empty rooms in this house. I think it's just a shame, when I think of the poor bodies that are about, maybe sleepin' out on the cauld moor. I'll not take the life of this young lad, turning him away, and neither shall you, my man, if you want to have any comfort in your ain life."

"I warned him," said Dougal, "if he didna take my warning it's his ain wyte."

"It shanna be mine nor yours either," said Katrin, and, indeed, even Dougal, when he looked

out, perceived that there was nothing to be said. The snow had fallen so continuously since their arrival, that already every trace, either of wheels or hoofs, was filled up. The whiteness lay unbroken in the courtyard and up to the very door, as if no one had come near the house for days. Sandy was in the stable with his lantern, hissing over the little black pony as he rubbed him down ; but even Sandy's steps to the stable were wiped out by the snowstorm. It covered everything, fair things and foul, and, above all, every trace of a path or road.

"I'm no easy in my mind about what Sir Robert would say," he muttered, pushing his cap to his other ear.

"And what would Sir Robert say? If it had been a lad on the tramp, a gangrel person or selling prins about the road, he would never have grudged him a bed, or at the worst, a pickle straw in the stable on such a night. And this is a young gentleman of the family of the Lumsdens of Pottaloch, kent-folk, and as much thought of as any person. Is't a pickle straw the Laird would have offered to a gentleman's son like that? He's just biding here till the storm's over, if it was a week or a fortnicht : and I'll answer for to the Laird," Katrin cried.

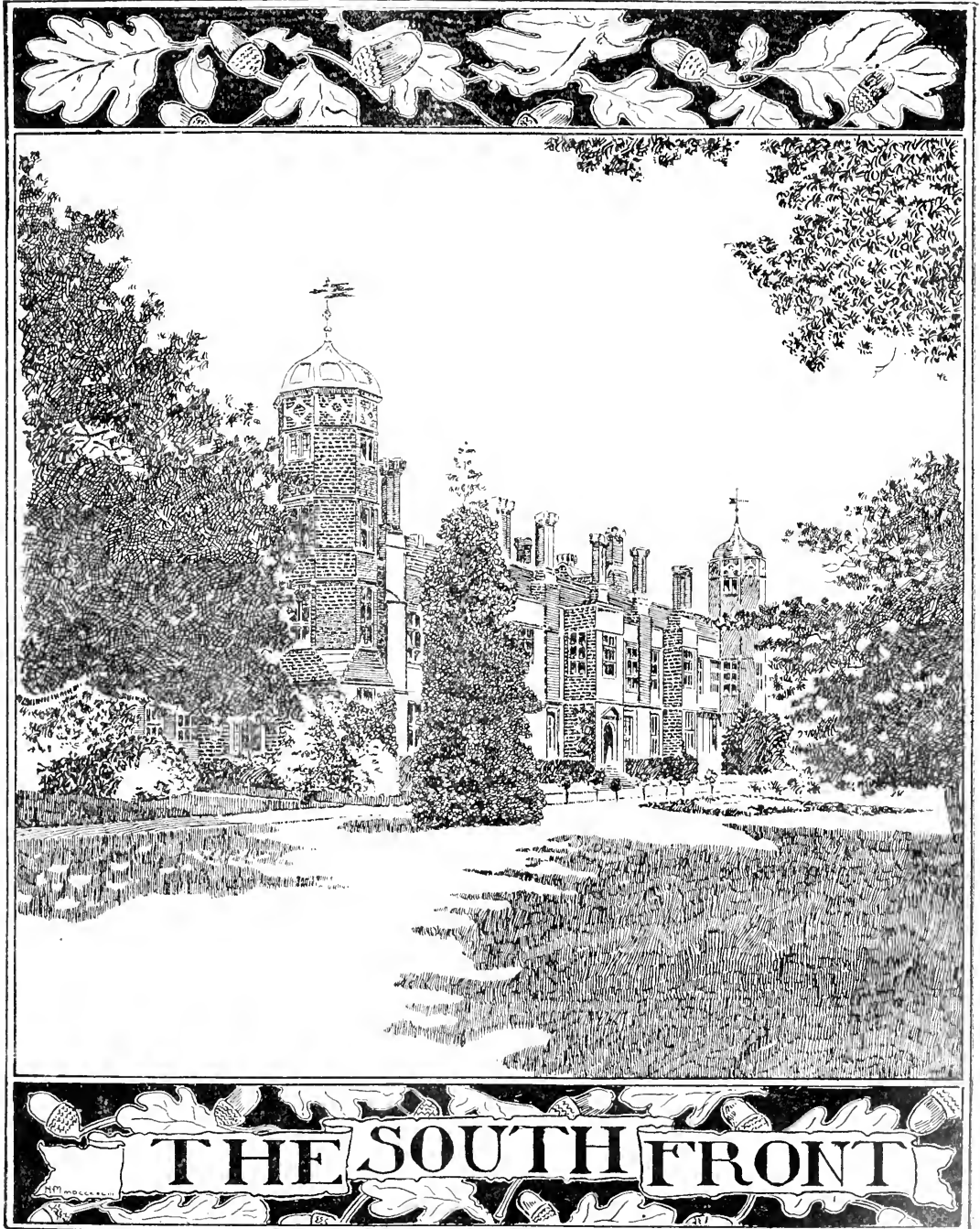
Dougal looked at her in consternation. "A week or a fortnicht ! It's no decent for the young leddy," he said.

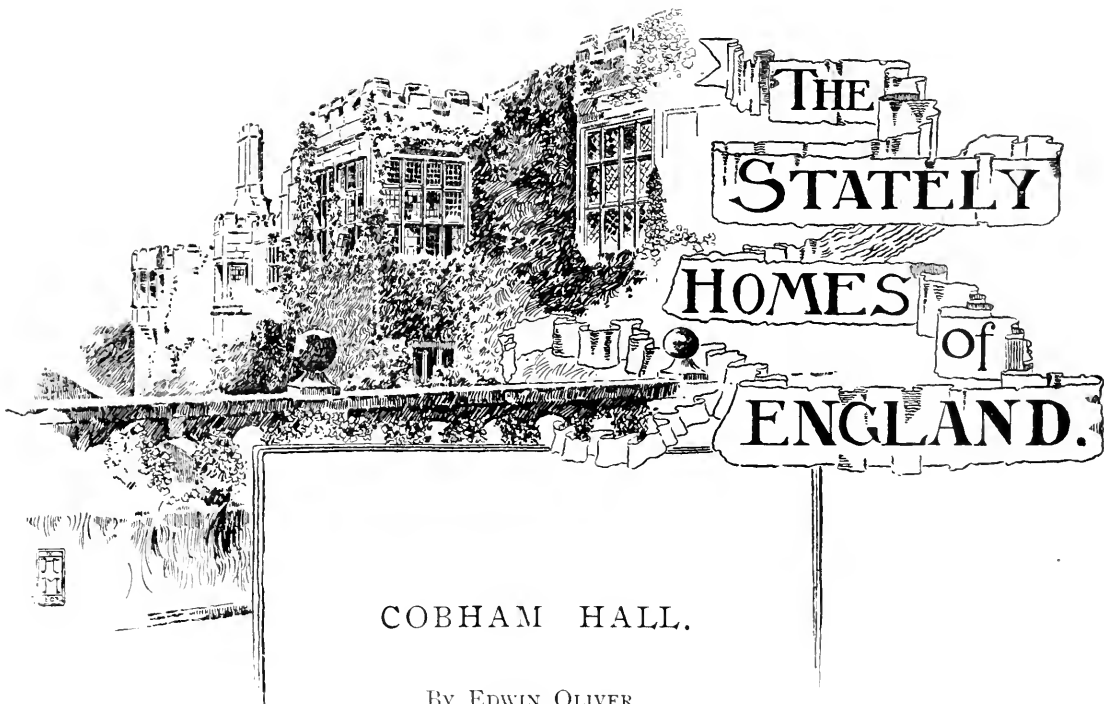
"It's just a grand chance for the young lady—company to pass the time till her, and her all her lane. If he will bide—but maybe he will not bide," said Katrin, with a sigh. Katrin, too, was a little anxious, as Lily was, for what to-morrow would bring forth. She had but taken the bull by the horns, in Dougal's person, saying the worst that could be said. "But it's my hope, Beenie," she said afterwards, with an anxious countenance, "that he'll just take his bonnie wife away to his ain house as soon as the snaw's awa'."

"Oh, ay ! ye needna have any doubt of that," said Beenie, with a broad smile of content.

"Then you'll just take off your grand gown and serve them with their dinner. I have naething but the birds to put to the fire, and that will take little time : and if they never had a good dinner before nor after, they shall have one that any prince might eat—between you and me, Robina, poor things, on their wedding night."

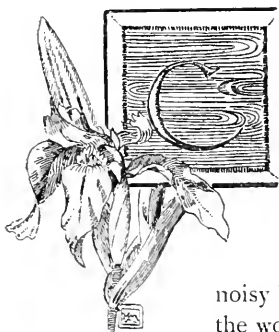
*(To be continued.)*





## COBHAM HALL.

By EDWIN OLIVER.



COBHAM is chiefly noteworthy for its Hall and its Hostel. Like mistress and handmaiden, they stand together; the one cold and serene, with the assured dignity of a noble lineage, holds herself aloof from the noisy hum of actuality as though the world had grown coarse and its touch defiled: the other, lured from the purity of the past to wed again, has taken to itself the tone, the garb, the very weakness of its second love. For Cobham is the Stratford of Dickens, and the Leather Bottle is the shrine where is jealously treasured every relic that, nearly or remotely, came within the influence of the master's touch. It is the fashion to deride poor Boz. Smart critics tell us that he is unworthy of the adoration which our youthful hearts were wont to give him. He is not an artist. His touch is strained: his values are false; his colours bizarre. We are told to sniff the foot-lights in his pathos, to note the tinkling of the jester's bell in his broad humour, and, alas! we are conscious in our innermost selves that, with advancing years, there is yet another old moon

added to the heaped-up planets which shone upon our childhood. Quilp no longer chills our blood; Captain Cuttle is sadly overdone; Sidney Carton is too melodramatic—but no, let us reverence our dead loves in books, as well as mortals: let us tenderly lay him aside with Tommy Moore and Mrs. Hemans; gape at Ibsen, swear by Kipling, if we will, but let us think tenderly of the child friend who made us weep and laugh at his pleasure. Good critic, your *fin-de-siècle* wisdom is convincing, yet it cannot rob us of those merry hours—those real tears that belong to the time when George Eliot was prosy, and Thackeray dull, but Dickens an eternal joy. The Wizard of Gad's Hill can yet move thousands that know not your voice. Myriads of pilgrims come yearly to this Cockney Mecca and do homage at the quaint old inn that bears the sign of Pickwick. Such ships as anchor at Gravesend, on their return from Greater Britain, send off their contingents eager to live again the scenes they know by heart.

Let us join them. Ere we pass on to the patrician home where dwelt the Dukes of Lennox and my Lord of Cobham, let us tarry among the hop-gardens, with little foot-sore David. It is a lovely country that we are in, such a scene as only England can produce—a pastoral paradise almost



## COBHAM HALL: WEST FRONT

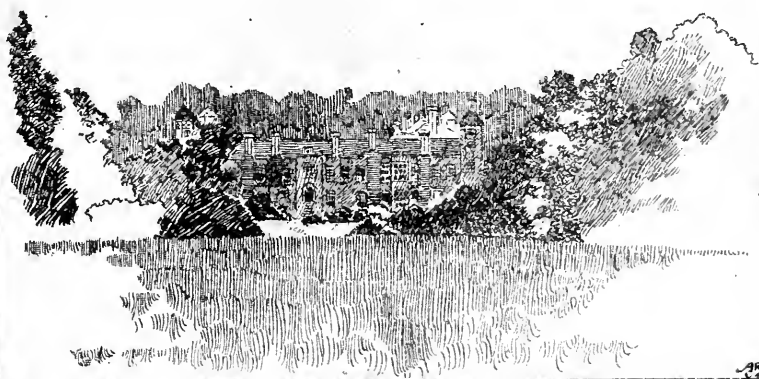
within sound of the great, stifling city, with its wilderness of brick and its sulphur-

ous pall wrapped around the struggling, starving, sinning millions. Oh! 'tis good to open one's lungs and draw in the fragrant air: to rest one's eyes upon the sweeping meadows and lichened oaks. It was here that the love-lorn Tupman came to nurse the canker in his heart; and well might the immortal Pickwick say: "... For a misanthrope's choice, this is one of the prettiest and most desirable places of residence I ever met with." As we cross the pretty churchyard, we face the "Leather Bottle" itself, in which snug abode they found the disconsolate lover doing justice to the fare, "as unlike a man who had taken his leave of the world as possible." This long, low-roofed room is the very altar of Dickens-worship. The heavy beams that support the ceiling speak, it is true, of an older day, but the walls are almost exclusively devoted to the creations of our author's brain. Strangely mingled together are the faces of the pompous, optimistic Micawber, the elastic Jingle, the realistic Sykes, together with several portraits of the writer himself, varying oddly in hue and feature. We may enjoy the privilege of sitting in the very chair wherein were conceived some of the most famous of his works.

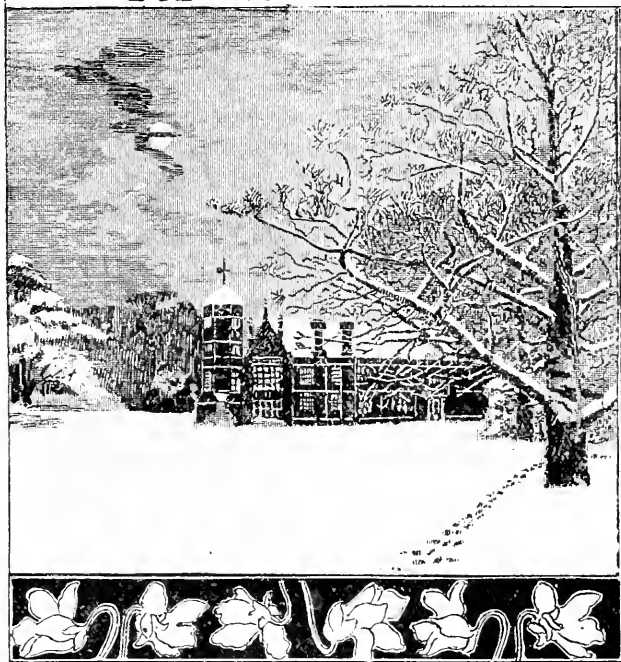
Dickens loved the old inn, and many a time walked over from his neighbouring seat at Gad's Hill to smoke a pipe there. Upstairs we are shown with honest pride by our well-informed host, the little bed-chamber to which Mr. Pickwick retired on the eventful day alluded to above. This room is one of the most interesting bits of the house, as it retains in all their original simplicity the little latticed window and the plain plank door. It will be remembered with what a sense of nervous excitement he lay awake or paced the floor, until, as an inducement to slumber, he perused the "Madman's Manuscript," that weird story which has scarcely been surpassed for condensed passion even in these days, when the *feuilleton* has become a fine art.

As we bid good-bye to our host, and find ourselves in the little village street, we can gaze upon the very spot where Mr. Pickwick made his immortal discovery. A few doors down the hill once reposed the great relic of prehistoric times, which bore the mystic legend of "*Bill Stumps His Mark*." Can we not picture the exultation of the illustrious finder at such a treasure which would render his name a household word wherever a veneration for the past prevailed?

"Mr. Pickwick's eyes sparkled with delight as he sat and gloated over the treasure he had discovered. He had obtained one of the greatest objects of his ambition. In a country known to



## NIGHT:SUMMER:ε:WINTER.



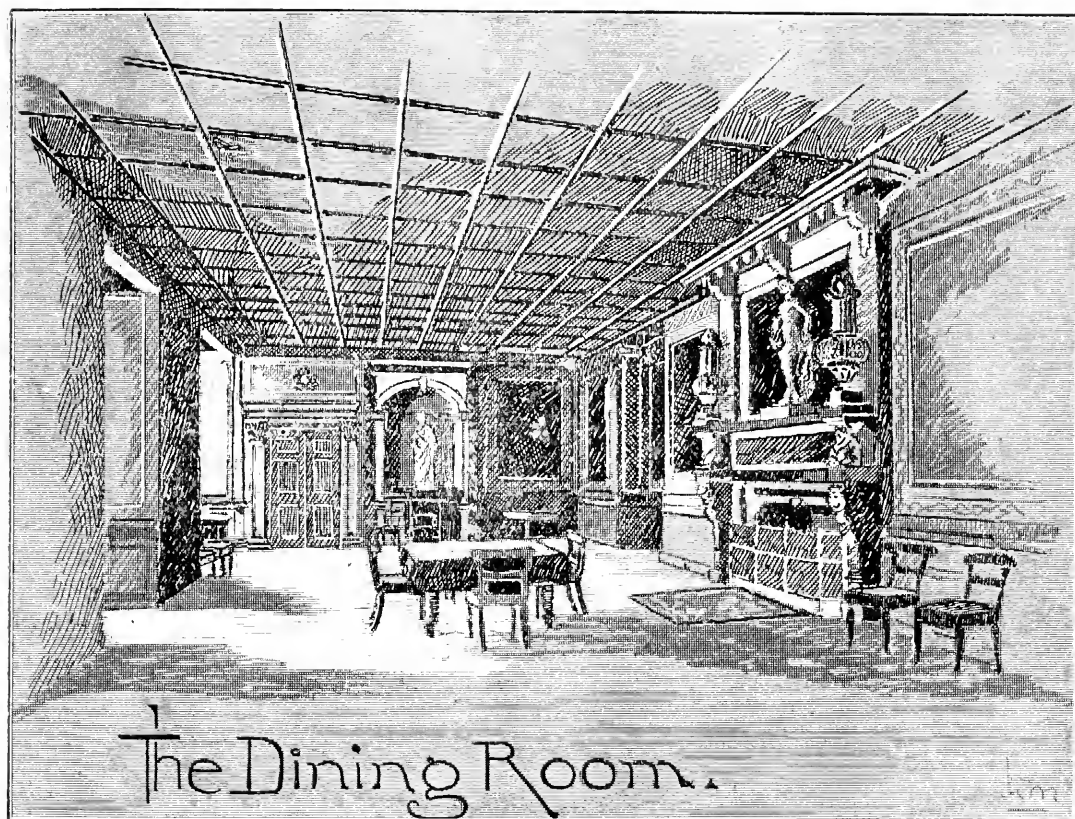
to the noble solemnity of the great hall, and exchange the jack-boots and swallow-tails for the ruff and rapier, the Pecksniffs for the Stuarts, cockney wit for Tudor grace. We leave behind the present when we enter the park gates, and feel our littleness between the double row of splendid limes which line the long avenue. The pretty, meek-eyed deer look curiously at us ere deciding that our modern tone creates a discord there. The huge, contorted shapes of the gnarled old oaks and chestnuts frown on us with the accumulated pride of the centuries. It would be little surprise to see the ring-letted head of a hunted cavalier look out from one of those hoary recesses and ask the whereabouts of Corporal Barebones. A bend in the road brings

abound in remains of the early ages: in a village in which there still existed some memorials of the olden time, he—he, the Chairman of the Pickwick Club—had discovered a strange and curious inscription of unquestionable antiquity, which had wholly escaped the observation of the many learned men who had preceded him. He could hardly trust the evidence of his senses."

Having paid due homage to the great Burlesquer of human weaknesses, we may turn for an antidote

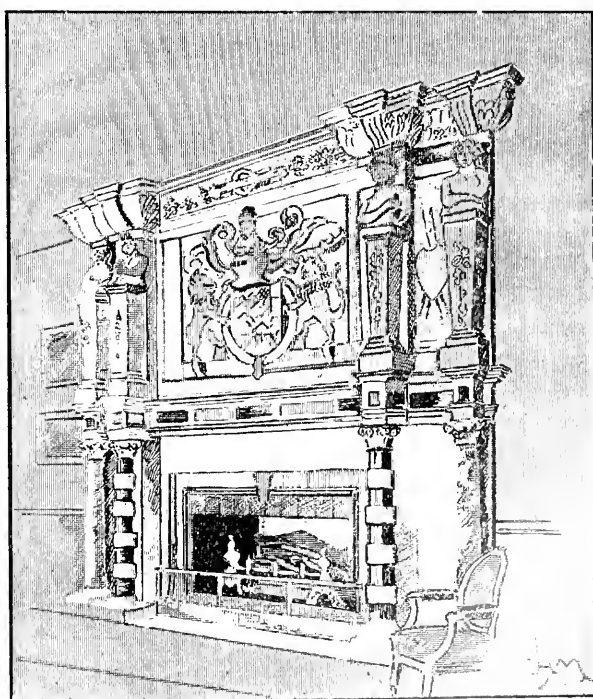
the broad centre of the mansion itself into view, with its wealth of glowing red brick, such as only a glorious past can give. The building is one of the most perfect specimens of Tudor architecture, which are the proud possessions of our historical land. The two wings which flank the centre building are of earlier date, having been erected by a former Lord Cobham in 1582. The final development of the hall, as it stands now, was the work of the last of the Scotch

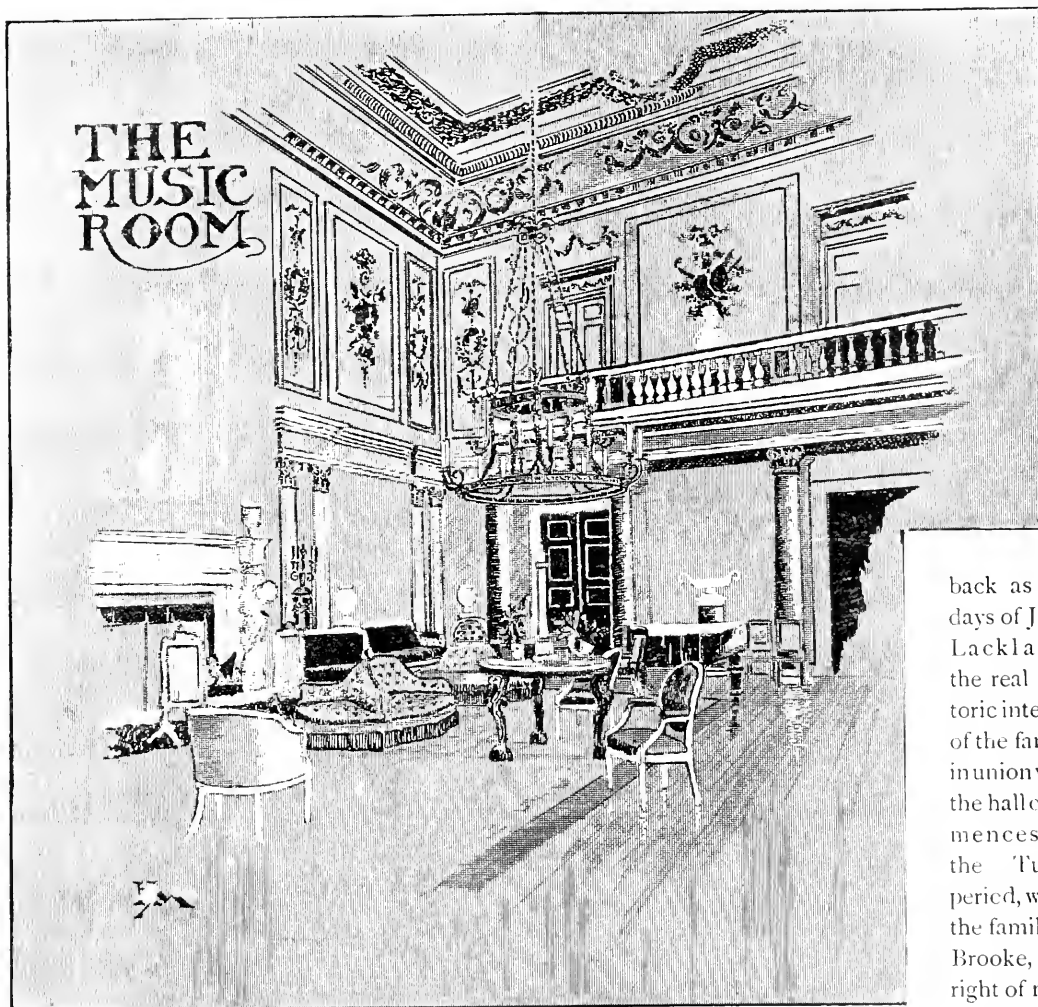




dukes whose brief reign there we shall touch upon later.

The interior fully bears out the pleasing impression which we have already gained from what we have seen. The chief feature, which alone would make it remarkable, is the superb collection of pictures, in themselves representing a princely fortune. In the long, square dining-room, with its splendidly-carved marble fire-place, are many full-length portraits of past celebrities, by Vandyke, Kneller, and other masters. But it is in the long drawing-room, which measures over 100 feet, and in the portrait gallery beyond, that the full extent of these pictorial treasures is realised. Here are seen, side by side, the works of Titian, Murillo, and Rubens, together with specimens of all the great schools of Europe. We may study on the walls the lineaments of Mary Stuart and her wily cousin of England, the vacillating Monmouth and the sad-faced Martyr-King looking proudly at us, as though the passions and weaknesses of frail humanity never swayed them, and as if the spectre of





back as the days of John Lackland, the real historic interest of the family in union with the hall commences at the Tudor period, when the family of Brooke, by right of marriage with

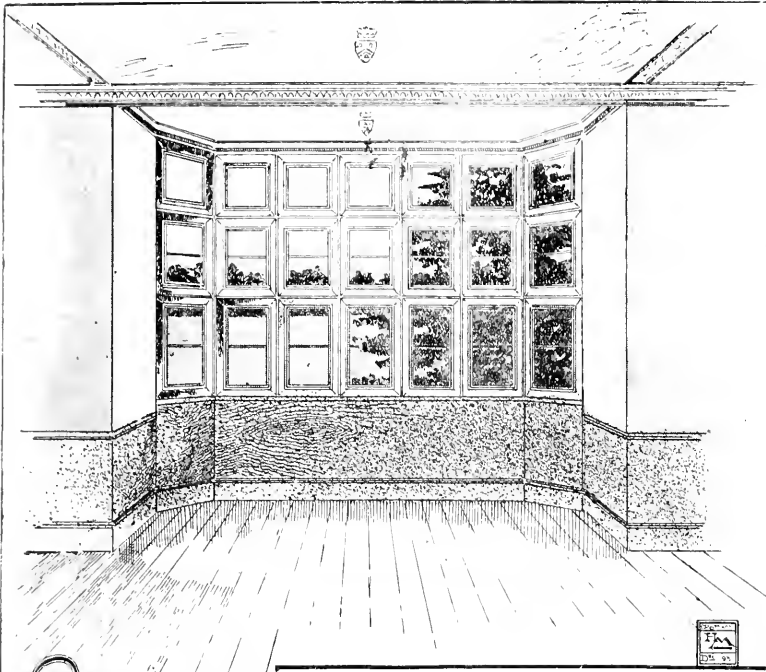
death did not ever dog their heels. The last room we are shown, which cheerfully eliminates the gloom that the society of the unhappy dead has cast upon us, is the superb music-room. We look down upon it from one of the marble galleries which flank it on either side, and, from this position of vantage, the fine proportions are not lost. Close beside us is the large organ. The walls of the chamber rise up to the roof of the building, and the consequent height renders the great size of the ground space less noticeable.

In every part of the hall is seen the tender care of the present owner, who has done so much to preserve and renovate the many beauties of this, in every respect, stately home of England.

Although there were lords of Cobham as far

the heiress, had for some generations ruled there with honour and distinction. Lord William played no mean part in the splendid dawn of England's greatness under the Virgin Queen. So well was he esteemed that his home was privileged to receive a visit from the sovereign herself when she made her "progresses" through the county. The chamber which she occupied has lately been restored after being allowed to fall into sad disrepair, and forms a most picturesque feature of the building, with its handsome marble fireplace and oriel windows overlooking the broad parklands. This peer held successively the appointments of Warden of the Cinque Ports, Ambassador to the Low Countries, Lord Chamberlain, and Governor of Dover Castle. By him were given the means to rebuild and endow the College which had been





Window  
in 2<sup>VEN</sup>  
Elizabeth's  
Room

originally founded by the third Lord Cobham, of martial fame in the stormy days of the first Edward.

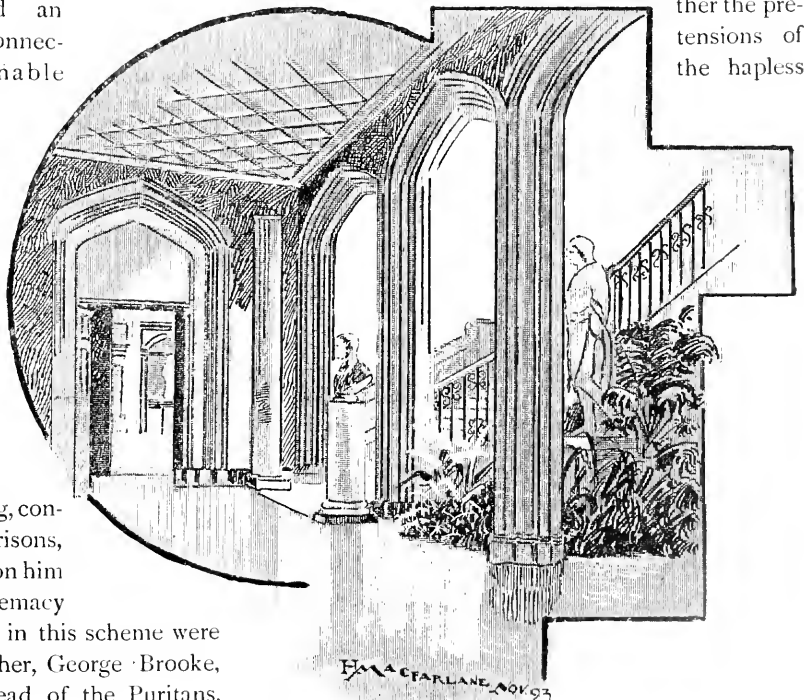
merely a tool in the king's hands, and lent himself, at the price of his own safety, to the traducing of the illustrious courtier and soldier. Here again the ceaseless activity of Rome formed the motive, and Spain promised the means and the men to fur-

Sir Griffin Markham, a friend of the Papacy, and two Secular Popish priests, named Watson and Clark. In the event of its success, the principal officers of State were to be allotted to the conspirators. Strange to say, the plot came to the ears of the ubiquitous Cecil, through the treachery of the Jesuit party itself.

The second plot, called the "Main" or the "Spanish Treason," was also associated with Lord Cobham and his brother, and is more remarkable than the other conspiracy, inasmuch as it served the "British Solomon" with a peg on which to hang his bitter animosity to Raleigh. There is little doubt that Cobham was

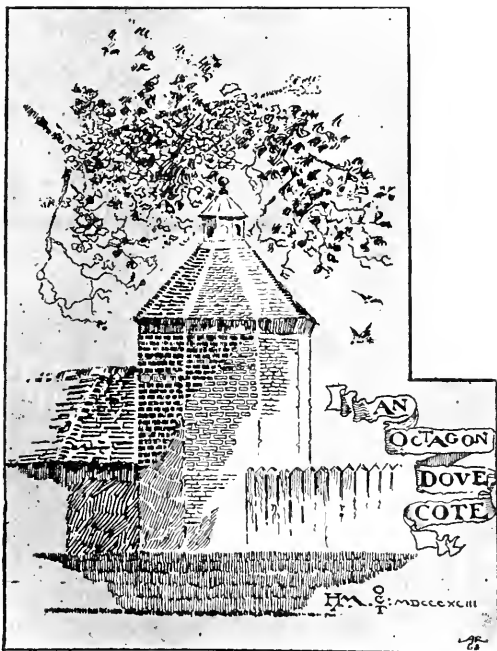
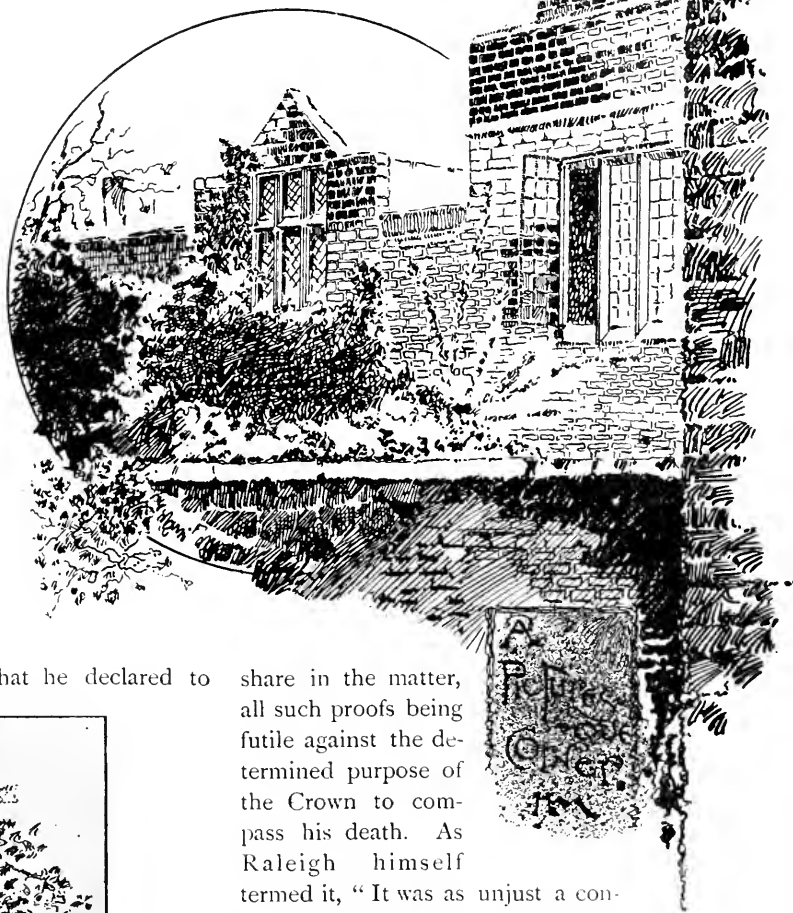
His son, Henry, gained an unenviable notoriety in connection with the questionable treason which signed the death-warrant of that remarkable personality, Sir Walter Raleigh. Two plots heralded the advent of the Stuart dynasty to the English throne, both resulting from the intricate Catholic machinations which undermined the whole of Europe. The first was the "Bye, or Surprise Plot," the purpose of which was to seize the person of the king, consign him to one of the State prisons, when pressure would be put upon him once more to sanction the Supremacy of Rome. The prime movers in this scheme were Lord Cobham and his brother, George Brooke, Lord Grey of Wilton, the head of the Puritans,

further the pretensions of the hapless



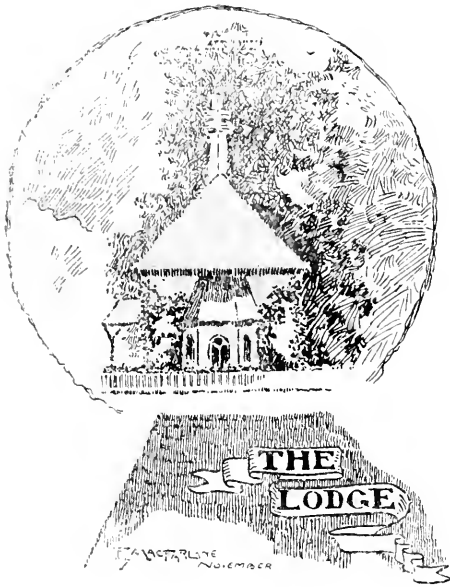
Arabella Stuart, who, like Lady Jane Grey, was a victim to her blood-relationship to the reigning sovereign. So small was Raleigh's connection with the conspiracy that the charge against him from the first hearing ended in his dismissal, and it was only on the interception of a warning, which he chivalrously sent to Cobham, that he was again arrested, and this time immured in the Tower. The return which the peer made for this act of friendship must stamp him, from whatever aspect it is regarded, as utterly despicable and wanting in the common instincts of humanity. To achieve his own release, he deliberately set about swearing away the life of his friend and, at the worst, fellow-conspirator. At his trial, he was shown a missive which Raleigh addressed to Cecil, suggesting that he was in correspondence with the Spanish Minister: at this, he offered to make a full confession of what he declared to

be the project of Raleigh. As a set-off to this, a letter was brought forward, written by Cobham himself, acquitting the knight of any



share in the matter, all such proofs being futile against the determined purpose of the Crown to compass his death. As Raleigh himself termed it, "It was as unjust a condemnation, without proof and testimony, as ever man had," and, in support of this, he quoted a saying of the king himself, in which the monarch prayed that he might never be tried by a Middlesex jury. Indeed, the latter seemed to have keenly felt their blood-guiltiness, for Osborne declares that "some of the jury were so touched in conscience as to demand of Raleigh pardon, on their knees."

The sham trial of Cobham followed this royal burlesque of justice. Here again he showed his craven spirit by not only further implicating Sir Walter, but also the life of his own brother, George Brooke. In spite of all this, he failed to escape condemnation, yet we may reasonably take for



prisoner for thirteen years, and his wife and children were rendered paupers, to feed the greedy maw of the king's pet profligate. "I mun ha' the land, I mun ha' it for Carr," replied the royal savant to the heart-moving supplications of Lady Raleigh. The golden visions with which Sir Walter plied the greed of the king alone permitted the latter to grant him a further short spell of life and liberty, which were to be contingent upon his bringing back from the Spanish El Dorado the fabulous wealth pictured by his sanguine imagination. The failure of these brilliant hopes, and the subsequent murder in cold blood of the gallant old soldier, are familiar history, and for ever consign the crafty, servile James to the execration of posterity.

On the attainder of Cobham, and the consequent forfeiture of his estates, the lands and hall were bestowed upon the Duke of Lennox, one of those noble Scotch paupers who were such sad thorns in the king's new-found prosperity. There were five of this Stuart branch, ere Sir Joseph Williamson, marrying the Lady Catherine Stuart, purchased the manor of the then Duke of Lennox and Richmond. By the same hymeneal process, John Bligh, Esq., M.P., came to rule at Cobham,

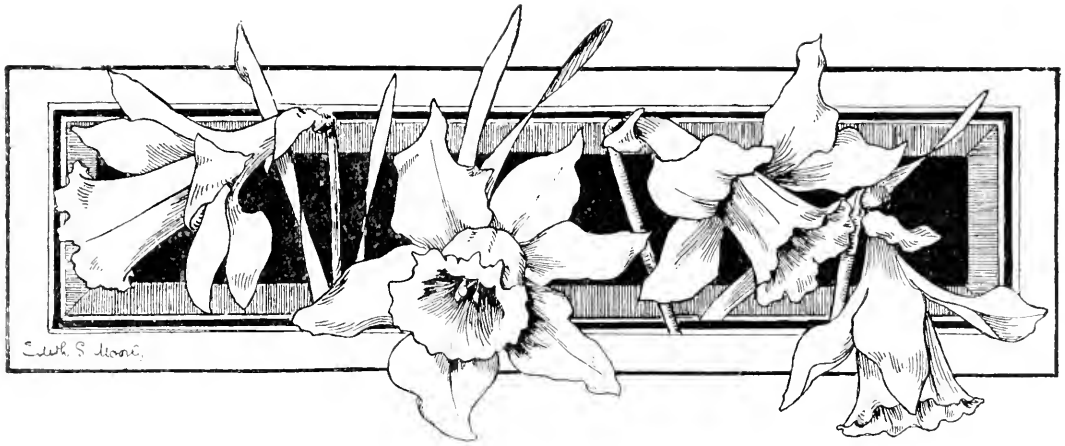
granted his secret knowledge that he was merely to play an imaginary part in the tragedy which was to overwhelm his confrères. With this understanding, the calm demeanour and lofty courage with which he ascended the scaffold and was induced to give his dying testimony, as it were, to Raleigh's guilt, can be well understood. Touching were his expressions of remorse for his disloyalty to the sanctity of the Crown. And humbly he "took it upon the hope of his soul's resurrection, that what he said of Raleigh was true." Together with him, Markham and Grey also passed to their impending death, when the further development of the farce was enacted by the prisoners being confronted with each other. Then, to their surprise, they were informed that the royal clemency had been pleased to spare their lives, Cobham being deprived of his possessions and titles, Markham suffering banishment, and Grey ending his days within the walls of the Tower. Those who suffered the extreme penalty of the law were George Brooke, who was beheaded, and the two priests, who were hanged and mutilated, according to the atrocious mode of punishment which was considered by our ancestors to promote the ends of social regeneration.

The story of Sir Walter's subsequent career forms one of the most romantic episodes of history. He escaped for the time with his life, but little else. His sentence was held over while he remained a



being presently raised to the dignity of Earl Darnley. Since his succession, the title and possessions have remained to him and his descendants, who have stainlessly preserved the escutcheon of their race.





## A RELIC OF W. M. THACKERAY.

BY ANNE THACKERAY RITCHIE.

MY father's love of pictures was almost greater than his love of books—books were work and daily bread; pictures were rest and holiday. He used to look grave and absorbed when he was writing or dictating; if we inadvertently came in when he was bending over his desk we felt that we disturbed him, and hurried away. But when he was drawing he would call us in to his study and show us what he had been about. He used to get us to work for him sometimes, to rub out the wood blocks which he considered failures. I can remember rubbing out his careful drawing for that week's *Punch*, on one occasion, in my anxiety to be of use. He used to draw us and our friends, or extemporise models at times with chairs and shawls and sofa cushions. He used to alter his work, and erase it, and paint and repaint it. He was rarely satisfied with his drawings, but I think he was happy all the time, and it is still a satisfaction as we look at the sketch books my father has left—the countless drawings and designs—to feel how many peaceful hours he must have spent upon them. He had much trouble and a great deal to bear with during his life, but while he was drawing I think he put it all away, and realised, as he beyond most people could do, what there is always in the world besides care and besides anxiety. I have often thought that the text of the many mansions

applied no less to this world of God's than to the Kingdom Come. Mansions of Art, of Music, mansions of Science, and the joy of books and the delight of added knowledge, and for some few the gift—that wondrous gift of creation—with which to repeat upon canvas and paper, and with charcoal and plaster, and by all sorts and conditions of means and strangest materials, the aspects of beauty, changing as they go by.

A book of my father's drawings, published only a few years after his death, contains a preface written by myself, from which I venture to quote a sentence concerning his sketches: "The pictures were rarely preserved by himself or put away with any care: the familiar stream flowed on, loved but unheeded by us, and among the many drawings he devised only a certain number remain. In all my remembrance he never had one of his drawings framed. When I was a child I remember a great scrap-book full of them, which was given me to play with and work my will upon. I can only once remember a questioning word of his concerning some scissor points with which I had ornamented some of his sketches . . . but although he certainly never wished us to make much of his work, and was almost morbidly afraid of over-rating anything he did, all that belonged to his art was a vivid and serious reality to him, and of unfailing interest and suggestion."

The little drawing which is here reproduced for the readers of *Atalanta* was a study, which I was delighted to discover, in a forgotten scrap-book, a design for a larger picture, which he subsequently executed, and which is no longer in our possession. I can remember the picture almost as long as I can recall anything. It must have been drawn in the writing-room in Kensington, in the old home of which many painters have crossed the threshold, both in our time and in that of the charming artist who succeeded us, and who lived there for so

many years. It will be seen that this tea-party (which is very likely some visionary tea-party from the little Hampshire village where much of my father's early boyhood was spent) is sipping tragedy along with its bohea. I have supplied the conversation from memory, but I think this is almost word for word what my father wrote beneath the larger drawing. Is this some new version of *Othello*? or is some happier fate in store for the reckless *Desdemona*, whose desperate venture is being discussed by the ladies?

## FOR THE CREDIT OF THE FAMILY.

By E. MACFIE.

### CHAPTER I.

MY brother Austin and I were living very quietly together in an out-of-the-way country village, when we were one day completely taken by surprise by receiving a letter from our aunt—a personage of whom we stood in great awe—announcing her intention of spending a night with us. To begin with, the idea of Aunt Margaret's leaving home at all was sufficiently astonishing, none of her relations having been favoured with a visit from her for several years past; yet here she was, writing from a London hotel, having had to come up to town on legal business. But it was still more amazing that Austin and I should be singled out for this embarrassing honour, because Aunt Margaret had so strongly disapproved both of his preferring the life of a civil engineer to going to Oxford, and of my being allowed to come and keep house for him, that the very plain-spoken way in which she had written to our parents on the subject had caused a decided coolness between us. Austin, however, took this sudden change of front with what seemed to me provoking calmness. "I am very sorry, Margery, for your sake, that the notice is so short," he said, "but surely we can make the old lady comfortable for one night. We have a spare bedroom, you know."

"Call it a spare cupboard, to be nearer the truth," I said sarcastically; "and think of Aunt

Margaret's feelings at being waited upon by a Kentish aborigine like Sarah, and at having to use our worthy landlord's goods and chattels instead of the treasures of china and silver and 'napery' at the Manor."

"Come now, Margery, you are making the worst of it. Aunt Margaret is a woman of sense, and won't expect blue roses. I can make allowance for your feelings as housekeeper, but I think this offered visit is really intended as an olive branch, and as such we will accept it."

The notice was short indeed. Aunt Margaret had not realised how far we were from civilisation in the shape of a second post, and her letter had not reached us until twenty-four hours later than she had evidently expected. This was Tuesday, and she had decreed that I was to meet her at the station nearest to our humble abode on Wednesday afternoon. When Austin had gone out with his dog I considered the matter seriously. Aunt Margaret had made no secret of her poor opinion of my powers of management; her prophecies of the debt and disgrace to the family in which the experiment would end had been gloomy indeed. I was, privately, rather proud of the judicious way in which I disposed of my small weekly allowance, and I was also extremely anxious that our dear people at home should not vex their kind hearts by picturing us as starving ourselves rather than ask for subsidies which we knew could not easily



be spared. I determined, therefore, that I would do my utmost, for the sake of both personal and family credit, to astonish Aunt Margaret by the simple ease, elegance, and plenty of our unpretentious little home. "I can make it up afterwards," I thought, "I would rather live on bread and scimp myself for a month than let her report that the poor silly children would soon tire of such a wretched, pinching experiment."

I went upstairs to inspect what Austin had called our spare bedroom, but decided at once that it would never do for a lady of our aunt's age and dignity. Our cottage was picturesqueness itself outside, but inside there was a good deal left to desire. With less than a day's notice, too, what could I do to prepare suitably for our visitor? and my heart sank when I looked at our handmaid, who was not unlike a well intentioned but rough little calf.

Austin left me next morning with a masculine caution, "not to worry myself about the old lady," and I undertook to meet her at the appointed time as his day would be spent in quite an opposite direction. Then Sarah and I set to work in earnest. My room was made ready for Aunt Margaret. All the prettinesses I had in reserve were produced and made the most of, and the general effect, if rather bare, was spotlessly clean and countrified. Downstairs my efforts were not so successful. Our two small sitting-rooms were furnished in a thoroughly useful but not artistic style, and though I had removed most of our landlord's cherished articles of vertu to the safe seclusion of a cupboard, and now adorned every available corner with flowers and graceful grasses, I could not feel contented with the result.

I was sitting gloomily on the window-seat contemplating deficiencies unnoticed before, when someone tapped at the open door, and did not wait to be ceremoniously admitted. It was our nearest neighbour, Mrs. Eden, the only person in Hazelford we knew intimately. She was the wife of a retired military officer, whose passion for botany had brought him to settle in the country, where he pursued various scientific hobbies, wrote articles upon them for magazines, and was happy. His wife pretended to take a dutiful interest in his "collections," but when the Major started off on a long expedition in search of some particular butterfly or water weed, she generally asked me to join

her in some more feminine form of amusement. "Why, what is the matter, Margery?" she asked now. "I came to see if you would drive with me to-day, but you look as if you had had bad news, or else had toothache."

I was tired and rather disheartened, so a little sympathy was consoling, and very soon Mrs. Eden knew all about Aunt Margaret's impending visit, and the special reasons I had for wishing it to go off well. She was greatly interested, and praised me most undeservedly for those reasons, and then, in her usual impulsive way she said—

"My dear Margery, I insist upon your allowing *me* to manage this little affair for you. Of course it is impossible for you to have things as you would if you were at home, but I am determined that no old dragon, were she a dozen aunts in one, shall crow over you, or pity you either. We surely know each other well enough now for you to let me help you under these circumstances, and I shall feel very much hurt if you won't. I shall also thoroughly enjoy outwitting your ancient relative, if she really does expect to find you living in the state of destitution you describe, though she ought to be ashamed of herself for not having more faith in you. Now you must let me send over a few little things which will be all that is necessary, and Barker shall come to wait on you this evening. You know she is a treasure of neatness and propriety."

"O no, Mrs. Eden," I cried, "I really cannot accept such a load of favours. It is more than good of you, but I am sure Austin would not like it, and I should feel exactly like the jackdaw in borrowed plumes."

"I will deal with Austin if he makes any difficulties, my dear," was her answer; "and surely you are not so proud as to refuse neighbourly help in such an emergency. As for Barker, it will be quite a treat for her to have something to do."

I raised several other objections, but Mrs. Eden was a person of great decision, and when once an idea had taken possession of her, she seldom failed to carry it out. In the end I was obliged to consent to the loan of the invaluable Barker, as well as to that of the other things pressed upon me by their owner. Remonstrances were futile, and merely sounded ungracious; and, feeling rather carried off my feet, I saw Mrs. Eden depart.

to return shortly carrying a large bundle of different artistic hues, and followed by a gardener with a wooden box evidently filled with heavier things. In a short time our two rooms were wonderfully transformed by embroidered sofa-covers and tablecloths: everything that could be so treated was draped in silk handkerchiefs or art muslins. Soft, frilled cushions adorned our chairs, and the fireplaces were hidden by beautiful "beau-pots" of pink peonies and sprays of copper beech. My friend was so unfeignedly pleased with her handiwork that I could not damp her enthusiasm by want of appreciation, but I had some secret misgivings, knowing Aunt Margaret's severely plain taste, and remembering the rigid tidiness and precision of the arrangement of the old-fashioned furniture at the Manor.

I begged Mrs. Eden to dine with us in the evening, but she declined, saying we must entertain our dragon ourselves. Then, promising to send Barker over in plenty of time to superintend Sarah, she left me to give that young person as many instructions as I thought prudent, and to do a little ornamental cookery.

At two o'clock, after a comprehensive survey of all our preparations, I started for the sleepy little town which was our nearest point of communication with the outer world. I did my shopping, and at four o'clock I helped Aunt Margaret out of the train at the quiet station. She was a very small, erect old lady, with keen, dark eyes, which noticed everything, and a quick, abrupt way of speaking. She greeted me very graciously, and talked of nothing more personal than the weather and the crops during our drive out to Hazelford.

When we arrived at the cottage an immaculately neat figure, in cap and apron, came down to the gate, took charge of bag and parcels, and ushered us into the sunny little sitting-room, where a daintily-prepared tea-tray was in readiness. Barker was an individual of whom I stood rather in awe. She always made me feel so very young and inexperienced, but she evidently impressed Aunt Margaret favourably, as I could see from the approving glances she bestowed upon her.

Refreshed by tea, my aunt began to catechize me, in a studiously dry yet secretly interested way, about my news from home, and about the way I spent my time while Austin was at work.

"The country agrees with you, Margaret, I

must say. I never saw you with so much colour before."

"I am very well indeed, Aunt, thank you," I said, but I was conscious that my colour was partly due to my morning's exertions, and also to the anxiety with which I was listening for Austin's return. I *must* get hold of him privately for a moment to warn him to express no surprise at the transformation of our rooms, and to ask no awkward questions about the appearance of Barker or of anything else which he knew was not our property.

At last I heard the gate open, and in a few minutes Austin joined us. He had always been a favourite with Aunt Margaret, in her own way, and, leaving them together, I slipped out as soon as I could, to satisfy my mind about our dinner, but was respectfully requested by Barker to leave the table to her, and not to trouble myself about details in which she evidently considered herself much more of an authority than I could be.

I went back to find that the altered appearance of the room had just dawned upon Austin's mind. I saw him look inquiringly at several of Mrs. Eden's loans for the occasion, and an inconvenient question was trembling on his lips, when I threw myself into the breach by proposing to take Aunt Margaret upstairs, and after seeing that she had all she needed, I hastily fled. Austin was full of curiosity, not unmingled with contempt, for "all this frippery," and when he heard where the frippery came from, and also about the loan of Barker, he was inclined to be restive at first, having a full share of our family aversion to a feeling of indebtedness. I had to reason with him seriously, and finally to confess the motives which had led me to accept Mrs. Eden's proffered favours, on which he admitted that I had meant well, but that all the same it was a mistake. I did not like this confirmation of my own inward misgivings, but all I could do was to implore him not to let our visitor have any idea of the efforts we had made for her benefit, and to assure him that Mrs. Eden and I were on quite sufficient terms of intimacy for her to carry neighbourly kindness even to its present lengths.

"Well, well, Margery," he said, "Aunt Margaret ought to be very grateful to you and Mrs. Eden for your trouble, and I won't let the cat out of the



bag if I can help it, but she could corner me very easily if she tried."

Dinner went off without the slightest *contretemps*, and was served on Mrs. Eden's prettiest china dinner-service. No butler could have waited upon us more dexterously and quietly than "that decent, sensible woman, your maid," as my aunt called her, when we had adjourned to the sitting-room, and coffee was brought in. I thought I must in honour explain that Barker was not our own particular treasure, and had begun to do so when the uninvited entrance of Austin's dog interrupted me. Pepper was not yet past his puppyhood, and, though he was a dear affectionate animal, his onslaught, and the fuss he made before he could be induced to withdraw, so distracted our thoughts from any other subject that, when peace was restored, no further reference was made to Barker. The evening seemed considerably shorter than I had expected, and when it was over, Austin congratulated me on its success, and said he had never seen the old lady so amiable. This was very encouraging, and I went to bed quite inspired, after warmly thanking Barker for her share in the triumph.

Aunt Margaret had to return to town next day by a morning train, and Austin for once was free to drive her to the station and see her off. We parted on very friendly terms. "I must say, Margaret," she said to me at the last moment, "I did not expect to find you such a good manager, and living so comfortably. I can only hope, my dear, that you will not tire of being careful and economical, and, above all, I advise you not to part with that clever, respectable woman, your maid. That reminds me, I have not seen her this morning. I suppose it was the village girl who helps her who came to my room? It is a great advantage for her to be under someone who can train her so well."

Here was my opportunity, and alas, I must confess that I did not use it. It was cowardly, I know, but I thought to myself that once I embarked upon the explanation of Barker's identity, it would lead to further complications, and Aunt Margaret's visit, which had just come to such a smooth and successful close, would be wrecked on sand-banks of doubt and disapproval. I regretted it greatly afterwards, but at the moment I said to myself, "Least said, soonest mended," and replied,

"Yes, that was Sarah, Aunt, but do you know I am afraid I ought not to keep you? Farmer Dean's cob is a most deliberate animal, and it is a long drive to the station."

"Good-bye then, my dear," said my aunt, "and I shall expect a visit from you both at the Manor before long, I shall speak to Austin about it on our way to the town."

I gave a sigh of relief when they were fairly started, and then set to work to restore our rooms to their normal condition. When Austin came back he reported that Aunt Margaret had been very gracious to him during their drive, and had spoken highly of the pleasure her visit had been to her.

"Well, Mrs. Eden and Barker really deserve most of the credit," I said. "Now do come with me to thank her, it is only polite."

Austin consented rather unwillingly, and we went in at the Edens' garden-gate, to find the Major absorbed in the study of a new specimen of the beetle tribe he had captured the day before, and his wife much more interested in our experiences than in the unfortunate insect under the microscope. She refused to hear any of our thanks, saying,

"Nonsense, my dear, you have nothing to be grateful for, and, as for Barker, she thoroughly enjoyed herself. I am delighted that it all went off so well, and if that old aunt of yours has not gone away determined to leave you a large legacy in her will, she will deserve to be added to the Major's collection as an unnatural monster."

## CHAPTER II.

AUNT MARGARET wrote to tell us that she had got safely back to town, but she said nothing about her future movements, and we naturally concluded that she would return as soon as possible to the Manor.

More than a fortnight after her visit, I was deeply engrossed one afternoon in dressmaking, the stern realities of a useful serge dress occupying all my attention. The room wore its most everyday appearance, a large flat-iron was cooling on the hearth, and, like most amateurs, I had bestrewn the floor liberally with shreds of material. Mrs. Eden was away from home, and as, except on the rarest occasions, she was the only caller we ever had, I

was taking advantage of a free day to give myself undisturbedly to my work. So secure from interruptions did I feel, that I scarcely noticed the sound of horses' feet rapidly approaching, nor did I realise the awful fact that they had stopped at our gate, until a footman was actually opening the carriage door. A tall girl, in the lightest and smartest of summer array, got out, and then another lady. They were perfect strangers to me, but who, who was this who followed them slowly, and then led the way up the little path, with its border of box and old-fashioned flowers? I felt absolutely petrified with dismay when I heard a sharp knock at the door, twice repeated before Sarah shuffled along the passage, looking, I felt convinced, more aboriginal than ever after a morning of cleaning and sweeping, and then—there was no doubt about it—it was Aunt Margaret's voice asking, rather impatiently, if I was at home. The next minute the misguided Sarah had opened the sitting-room door, and on the threshold stood my aunt and her two companions.

I felt my face turning scarlet, but with the calmness of despair I said:—

"Show the ladies into the dining-room, Sarah;" before they had time to advance further. Aunt Margaret mercifully had the tact to follow this hint; but, to complete my discomfiture, I saw Sarah, after ushering them into the other room, make a frantic swoop upon the tray containing the remains of my modest luncheon, which, as ill-luck would have it, she had left upon the table instead of removing to the kitchen.

What *could* I do? Nothing, as far as I could see, but fly upstairs to make what desperate efforts I could towards neatness, give Sarah stringent orders to make herself presentable in case I rang for tea, and descend, feeling—but no, I won't say what my feelings were towards Aunt Margaret at that moment.

I went into the room with the sensations of an animal at bay, was introduced to Lady and Miss Calthorpe, and then heard my Aunt's explanation of her re-appearance. It seemed that the legal business which had brought her up to town had proved a much longer and more tedious affair than she had expected, yet it was too long a journey for her to go home and back again while waiting for the final meeting. She and her elderly maid were both heartily tired of life in a London

hotel, when she was surprised by a call from two old friends, whom she had not seen for several years. They had been in town for two days, and were equally surprised to see Aunt Margaret's name among the list of people staying in the quiet and intensely decorous private hotel they always patronized. Hearing what was keeping her in London, and being a most hospitable old couple, they insisted on her returning home with them until the day fixed for the lawyers' meeting, and would take no denial. It was not until she had been with Mr. and Mrs. Verney for some days that she discovered that they lived within a drive of Hazelford, their railway station being upon a different line to ours. When her hostess heard that she had a nephew and niece within reach, she at once jumped to the conclusion that we must mutually be pining to meet each other again. Lady Calthorpe, who was Mrs. Verney's married daughter, was the bearer of pressing invitations to Austin and me to come to Dalehurst during our Aunt's stay there, and the well-meaning old lady had evidently never rested until she had arranged for us to be taken by storm in this cruel way.

Aunt Margaret herself was partly responsible also for it, for although of course I did not know it at the time, she had been so favourably impressed by our little ménage, that she was, in her secret heart, not unwilling to display it, and the good points of her niece and nephew, to her old friends. Alice Calthorpe and I became friends in spite of this our first unlucky meeting, and she has often amused me by her account of what she expected to see in our model establishment.

"I know Miss Fenwick thought me a shocking specimen of a modern girl," she told me, "she was everlastingly singing your praises, Margery, and telling us what a good housekeeper you were, and how pretty and artistic you had made your cottage. She is tremendously proud of you, though I suppose she would not let you suspect it for worlds, but she held you up as such a paragon, that I tell you frankly I came to Hazelford prepared to hate you, and you don't know what a relief it was to find you, well, no tidier than most people! I can't tell you how sorry I was for you that day, how you must have detested us for coming. I assure you, Mamma and I both admired your presence of mind and dignity immensely."

This was consoling to hear at a future time, but

at the moment I had no such comfort. I saw that Aunt Margaret's sharp eyes noticed the absence of all the little elegancies which had lessened the unmistakably hired look of the furniture, and I fancied that she was only waiting for her opportunity to put me through a cross-examination. I had tried valiantly to keep up an animated conversation with Lady Calthorpe, and, after waiting until I thought Sarah had had time to recover from her state of bewilderment, I ordered tea, inwardly praying that she would not forget all my precepts, and appear with a tablecloth and all the paraphernalia of a substantial meal. At this juncture, however, Lady Calthorpe, who, I think, must have pitied my embarrassed manner, suddenly remembered that she ought to take this opportunity of paying a call in the neighbourhood, and she promised to come back for Aunt Margaret in half an hour. But the Fates were certainly against me that afternoon, for just then the door opened, and Sarah charged in with a heavy tea-tray. My forebodings were partly realised—she had made tea in our landlord's largest Britannia-metal teapot, as more suited to the occasion than the homely brown one I used when alone, and, instead of the customary plate of thin bread and butter, she had brought in a huge cottage loaf and half a pound of butter. Remembering the dainty afternoon tea with which Aunt Margaret had been received before, thanks to Mrs. Eden and Barker, I dared not look at her now, but could only press Lady Calthorpe to let me give her a cup. Then she and her daughter left us, and, directly we were alone, Aunt Margaret coughed ominously, and began:—

"I am sorry to have taken you by surprise, Margaret, but my time is limited, and, as I had told my friends how exceedingly pleased I had been to find you and Austin in such comfortable quarters, I thought that I might venture to bring them with me without giving you warning."

"Well, aunt," I said, "I own that I wish you had let me know you were coming. It is not often you would find me in such a mess, but to-day it was a little unfortunate. I am sorry, too, that Austin is away, he will not be home until late this evening."

"Now, my dear Margaret, I am going to speak plainly to you, and I hope you will take it as it is meant, entirely for your own good. I cannot

pretend not to notice a difference in things since I was here before. Austin's absence surely does not entail that of your afternoon tea set, for example, not to speak of other things. And, my dear child, where is that superior woman, your maid? It is not at all suitable for you to have only that awkward, uncouth, young girl, who opened the door this afternoon: you are yet too inexperienced a mistress to train her properly."

"Barker was not our servant, Aunt Margaret," I said, bluntly, "her mistress was kind enough to lend her to us for the evening you spent here, because Sarah is, as you say, rather a rough specimen."

"Do you mean to tell me that you accepted such a favour as that from a stranger, Margaret? for a stranger her mistress must be, you have not lived here a year yet."

"Mrs. Eden is a friend, and no stranger," I answered. "She has been kindness itself to us, and we owe her a good deal more than the loan of Barker for one evening."

"Have you been borrowing money?" cried my aunt in a horrified voice. "Child, I knew that was what would happen when your foolish parents consented to this insane idea of your living with Austin. How could they expect you to keep out of debt on such a mere pittance! I always said that this would be the result."

"I have *not* been borrowing money," I said, indignantly. "Austin and I are indebted to Mrs. Eden for a great deal of neighbourly kindness, but you need not fear our taking anything else from her."

"Did the neighbourly kindness include all those bright cushions and covers, and even your plates and dishes?" inquired Aunt Margaret grimly, for she was, as I said before, extremely plain-spoken when she was angry. I think this question was intended for sarcasm, for she was completely silenced for the moment when I replied calmly, "Yes, it did, we wanted to make the rooms look prettier and more home-like, and Mrs. Eden helped me to arrange them."

"Well, well!" almost gasped Aunt Margaret, "to think that a niece of mine should be reduced to that. And your brother, what did he say to it all?"

I hastily acquitted Austin of having aided and abetted me, but my revelations had been too

much for Aunt Margaret, and she proceeded to read me a lengthy and serious homily upon the dangers of new acquaintanceships, my lamentable want of proper pride, and the folly of having tried to deceive *her*, even from the best of motives. I could not refrain from telling her what those motives had been, and she, thoroughly vexed, I think, at the result of her attempt to show off her model young relations, scolded me vigorously for not having trusted her to make allowances. She was, I am sure, angry both with herself and me, and I hailed the sound of the returning carriage with some relief.

Aunt Margaret parted with me at the gate in by no means as cordial a manner as before, and, after trying to evade the renewed invitations to Dalehurst as courteously as possible, for I felt then that all I desired of the Calthorpes was to forget my existence, I watched them drive away. Further dressmaking was more than I felt equal to after this, and I took Pepper out for a walk, hoping to soothe my ruffled feelings by active exercise, which he always provided for his companion, being a dog of an inquiring turn of mind, with a strong will of his own. I had calmed down to some extent before Austin came home, but he nearly roused my angry passions again by being so unfeeling as to laugh heartily at my account of the afternoon.

"It's all very fine for you to laugh," I said, indignantly, "but I do not find it at all funny. It was *too* bad of Aunt Margaret, and I feel as if I never wished to see her again. As for going near

those Calthorpes, I simply won't do it, no doubt they will make a fine story out of Miss Fenwick's phoenix of a niece."

Austin soothed me as best he could, admitting that it had been hard lines on me to be taken at such a disadvantage, and to have had all my hospitable little deceptions so ruthlessly exposed. But his shoulders shook again, and his amusement was so infectious that finally I joined in it, rather hysterically, and felt decidedly better.

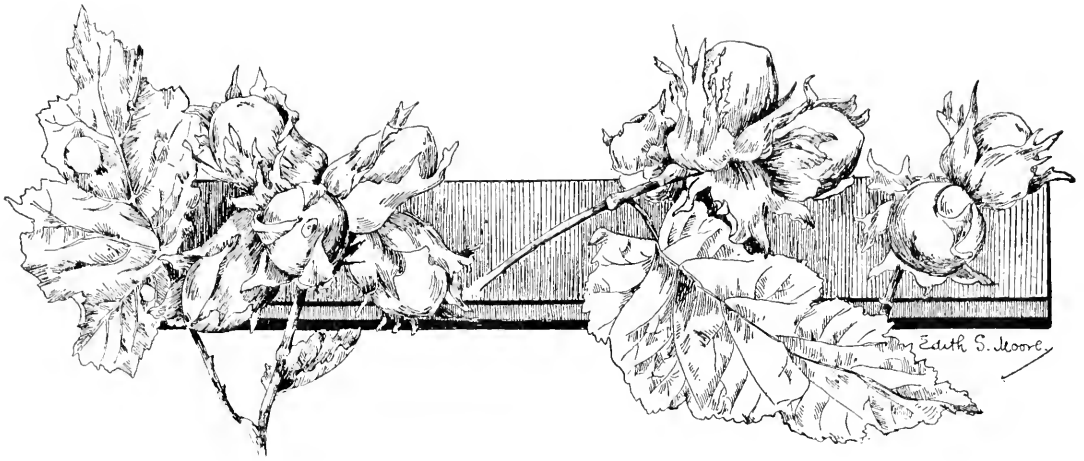
"There is no good in crying over spilt milk," he said at last, "and after all nothing so very dreadful has happened. People can't live prepared for visitors in a place where one a year is the average allowance, and I am sure the Calthorpes will think none the worse of you."

Goaded by me, Austin walked over to Dalehurst, and reported that he thought Aunt Margaret was rather compunctious, and was quite ready to forget the unlucky little episode. She did not allude to the subject of Barker or of Mrs. Eden, and sent me a fairly gracious message.

We have had other visitors since then at the cottage, but, warned by experience, I attempted no efforts for their benefit beyond those my own resources were equal to, though Mrs. Eden never fails to beg me to draw upon her establishment on such occasions.

I have paid several visits to Dalehurst since our first introduction to the Calthorpes, but Aunt Margaret has not ventured on another journey south, nor do I think we shall ever be called upon again to entertain her at Hazelford.





## GIRTON COLLEGE.

BY L. T. MEADE.

A POPULAR movement can never be fully judged on all its merits until we can look back at it. Perhaps in the whole of the Victorian Era no question provoked stronger or more adverse criticism than that which related to the higher education of girls. Husbands, fathers, brothers, predicted the most appalling results from such a course of unnatural training. Woman was to leave home—who was to take her place? Were all womanly graces to die? Nervous imaginations evolved grotesque caricatures of a creature—neither man nor woman—who was destined to take the place of the sweet and modest English girl. The girl who learnt Greek with her brothers, and who dared to think for herself, was considered a fit subject for ridicule. In short, there was no niche for her in the world.

Looking back, however, over a period of nearly forty years, we find that all the hackneyed old objections have been proved to be utterly groundless. The girls who have been taught to use their brains are not ungraceful, not untender, not in any sense of the word unwomanly. The girl who thinks for herself can attend to domestic matters, and even, if necessary, cook quite as well as her sister of the olden times, who considered it indelicate to use her brain. In short, girls were never healthier and stronger in mind and body than now. The old, vapid, weary, useless life of mild flirtations and impossible dreams has given place to a wider, breezier existence.

In short, the girl may be fairly considered to have won in the battle, and the few people who

still retain their old prejudices are an ever dwindling minority.

When all is said, however, for and against higher education, one cardinal fact must ever remain in favour of the movement, and this fact is so momentous, and so characteristic of our age, that it would bear down any amount of the old prejudice did it still exist.

Owing to various circumstances, too numerous to mention, the daughters of professional men and of many others have to earn their bread. If their fathers could provide them with the pittance which were considered sufficient to support their great-aunts, they would, in these more expensive times, simply starve. Amateur work is universally acknowledged to be worse than useless. Women have to compete with men as bread-winners, and in all ordinary justice must be equally equipped for the fight.

This, after all, is the grand reason for higher education and for women's colleges.

Amongst the different Colleges which have sprung out of the great need for good professional work, Girton must take the precedence. It was opened twenty-four years ago, in a small house at Hitchin. This house was only prepared to receive six students.

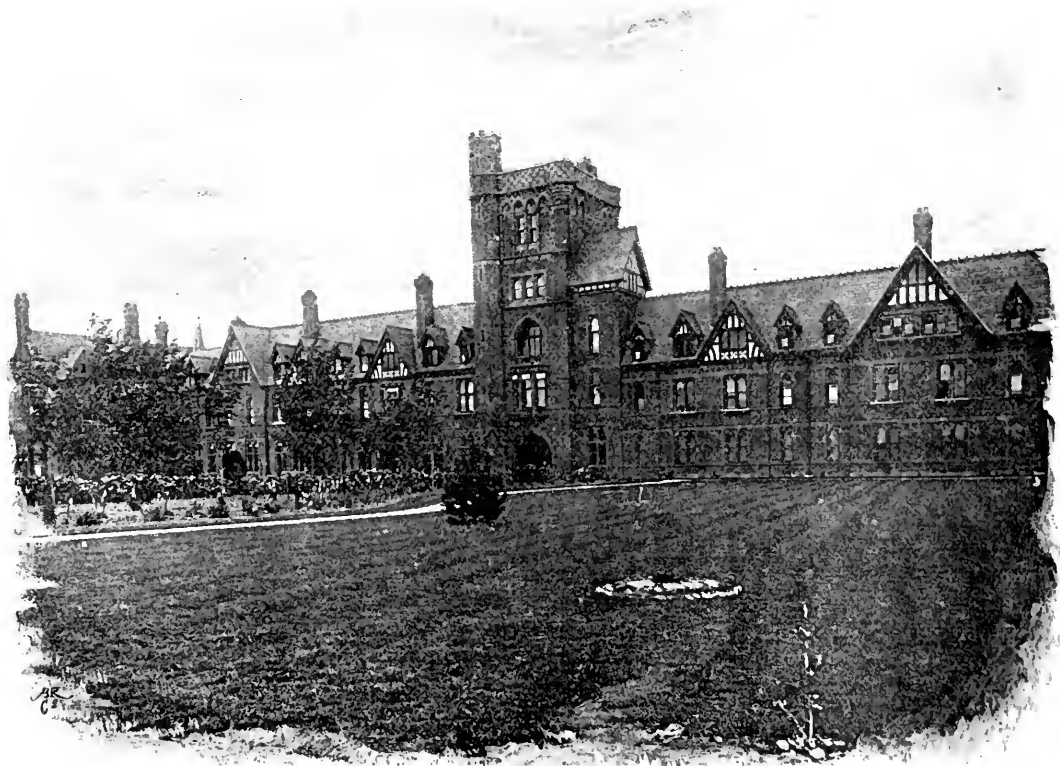
In 1873 the College was removed to a building erected for the purpose at Girton, a place situated a little over two miles out of Cambridge. Additions have been made from time to time to the original house to meet the needs of an increasing number of Students. The College is now a very

imposing building, and contains special rooms for the Mistress, Vice-Mistress, Junior Bursar, six resident lecturers, and one hundred and five students. There are thirteen lecture rooms, a magnificent library, a chemical laboratory, dining hall, reading room, and other accommodation. The object of the College—here I quote from the report, July, 1893—is to hold in relation to girls' schools and home teaching, a position analogous to that occupied by the Universities towards the public schools for boys. The students' fees are fixed on such a scale as to secure that, the building

who shall not have passed an examination as to knowledge and ability.

Since the foundation of Girton, four hundred and sixty-seven students have been in residence. Of these, a large proportion have obtained honours according to the Cambridge University standard, and forty girls have passed examinations qualifying for the Ordinary B.A. Degree.

The fame of Girton has become world-wide, and there are few educated girls now who do not know something about the College, either through having friends there or by personal experience.



VIEW OF GIRTON COLLEGE.

having been provided, the institution shall be self-supporting.

The College has been incorporated under the name of Girton College.

It is established to maintain and conduct the Higher Education of Women; and to obtain for the students admission to the Examinations for Degrees of the University of Cambridge, and generally to place itself in connection with the University.

No girl is admitted as a student at the College

It may be interesting, however, to the girl readers of *ATALANTA* who have not yet been to any Woman's College, to give a brief sketch of the course of training, and to describe the necessary steps which students must take to insure admission.

The College course occupies three years, half of each year being spent in residence. The Academic year is thus divided: Michaelmas term, beginning in October, nine weeks; Lent term,

beginning in January, eight weeks; Easter term, beginning in April, eight weeks.

The charge for board, lodging, and instruction is thirty-five pounds per term. This sum must be paid in advance. It covers all fees, and even provides for carriage drives to Cambridge to the University Lectures.

Girls who wish to study at Girton are required to pass an Entrance Examination, and to furnish a satisfactory certificate of character. They may enter the College either at the Michaelmas or Easter term. Except in special cases, students are not received under the age of eighteen.

The Entrance Examinations are held in London in March and June. A fee of one pound is charged. Special forms of entry may be obtained from the Secretary. Applications for these forms should be made in time to return them, filled up, with the examination fee, not later than January 31st for the March examination, and April 30th for the June examination.

The Examination is conducted in writing, and comprises the following subjects:—

The principles and practice of Arithmetic, English Grammar and Composition, Physical and Political Geography, English History, Scripture History.

Every candidate is also required to satisfy the Examiners in two of the following subjects: Latin, easy passages for translation from Latin into English, and *vice versa*; Greek, an easy passage of Attic Greek for translation into English, and *vice versa*; French, German, Elementary Mathematics.

In several cases, however, a certificate of having passed the Cambridge Higher Local Examination, provided that Group B is included, or the Matriculation Examination of the University of London, or several others, particulars of which can be obtained from the Secretary, is accepted in place of the Entrance Examination as qualifying for admission.

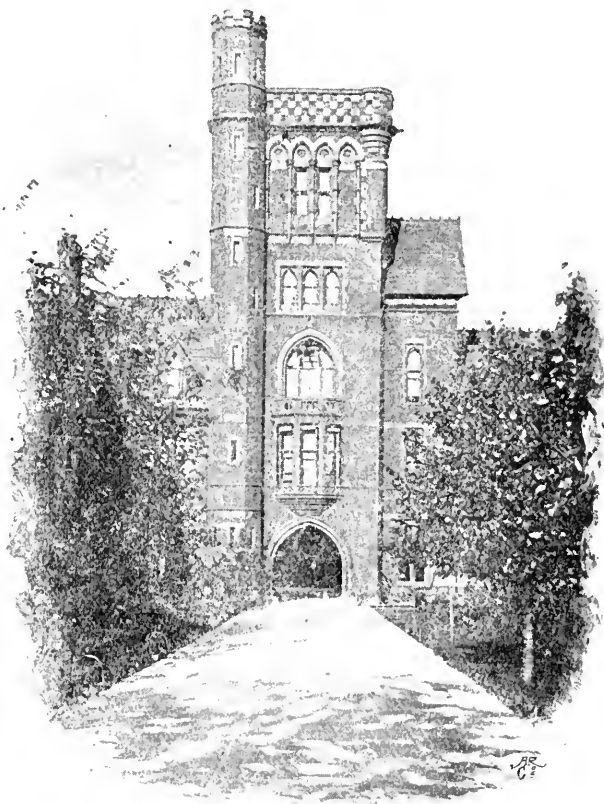
On entrance, the course of study comprises the following:—Divinity, Classics, Mathematics

Natural Science, Moral Science, History, Mediæval and Modern Languages, Theory and History of Education, Gymnastics.

The old Universities of Oxford and Cambridge will not yet confer degrees upon women, but a student at Girton, whose proficiency has been certified to the satisfaction of the College, according to the standard of examinations qualifying for the B.A., can have what is called a Degree Certificate. Each student holding such a Certificate is entitled to the rights and privileges of Certificated Students.

There are many Scholarships in connection with the

College, and those girls who find it difficult to meet the expense of such a valuable course of training, can have their Academical career made considerably easier by obtaining one of these. During the past year the sum of five thousand pounds was left to Girton by the late Madame Pfeiffer. This amount is held in trust for the College, and the income is to be applied to the maintenance of Scholarships or Student-ships, to which the name of Pfeiffer is to be attached.



THE GATEWAY.





ANOTHER VIEW OF GIRTON.

Last June four Pfeiffer Scholarships were conferred on students, of the annual value respectively of seventy-five pounds, forty-five, and two of twenty-seven. There are numbers of other Scholarships all of more or less value, and it is not very difficult for a girl of good ability to be able to help her College course in this way. There is also, I believe, a Loan Society for the benefit of intending students, but I have not been able to obtain full particulars with regard to it.

On arriving at Girton, each student is provided with two rooms—a sitting-room and bedroom. These are furnished so completely that even the most fastidious girl need only supply herself with a few cheap accessories to make her suite of rooms quite charming. I have been into several of the students' rooms, and cannot speak too highly of the refinement and taste which they exhibit. The home-like appearance of the bright little sitting-rooms, with their quaint windows and simple decorations, cannot fail to impress all visitors favourably. The girls are provided with fires and lights. They can receive friends in their rooms,

and, except when engaged in serious study, can have a perfectly free time while there.

The daily routine of life is as follows:—

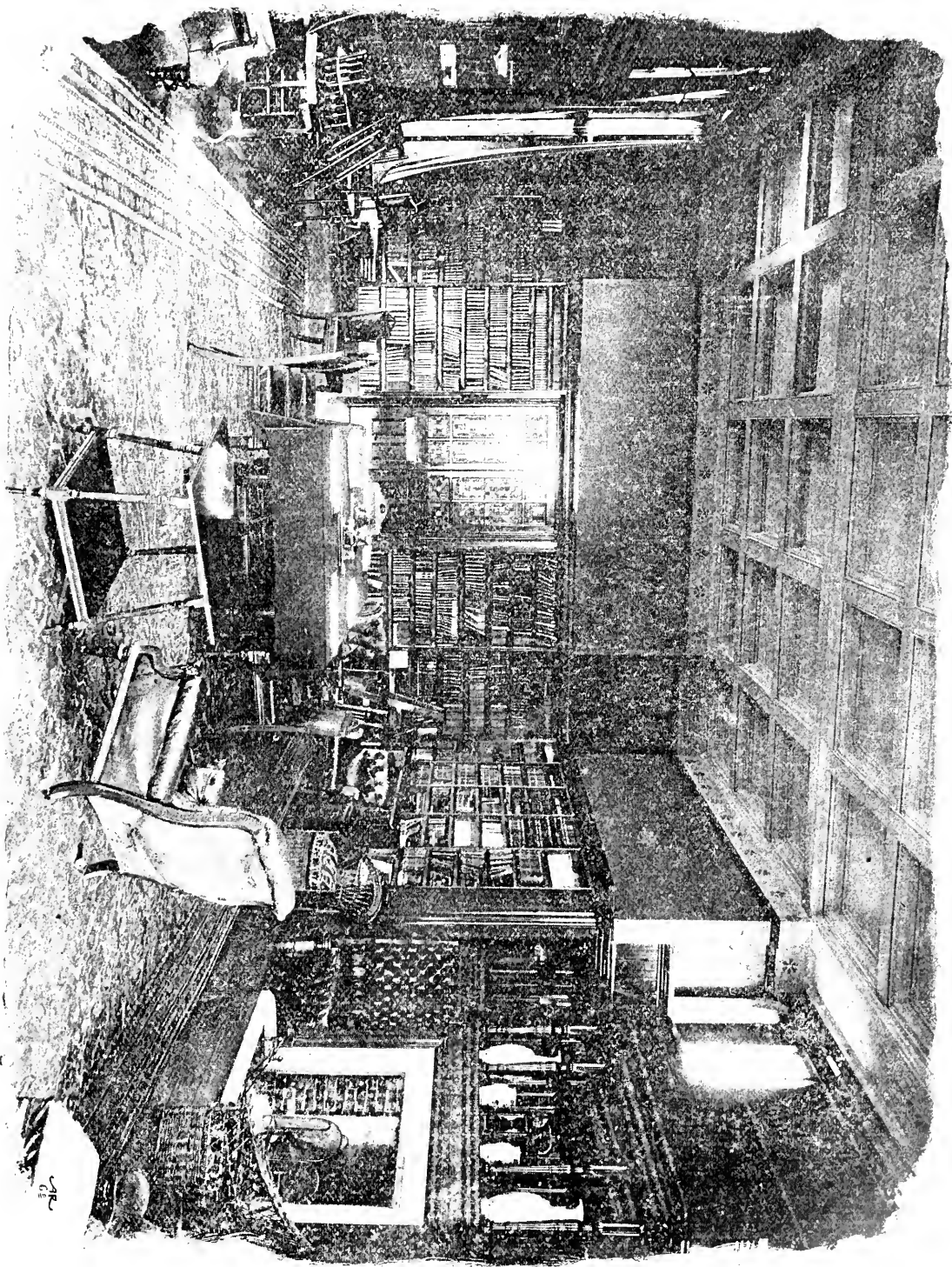
Prayers at 8 a.m. Breakfast from 8.15 to 9. Luncheon from 12 to 3 p.m. Dinner at 6 p.m.

Most of the Lectures are given in the afternoon.

Students are required to enter their names on the Marking Roll three times daily. Each student is required to be present at the Marking, and also at the Lectures belonging to their course, except when leave of absence has been granted by the Mistress. The girls are allowed to have tea in their rooms at 4 o'clock, and after dinner up to 9 o'clock.

There is a considerable amount of liberty given to those girls who wish to accept invitations or pay visits to friends; but with regard to this, there are also certain fixed rules which must on no account be broken. All girls must return to the College not later than 11 p.m.: they must not accept evening invitations for more than, on an average, once a week in any one term. They are not allowed to pay visits of any sort to College rooms





THE LIBRARY.

without special permission, and a student must always mention the place to which she proposes to go.

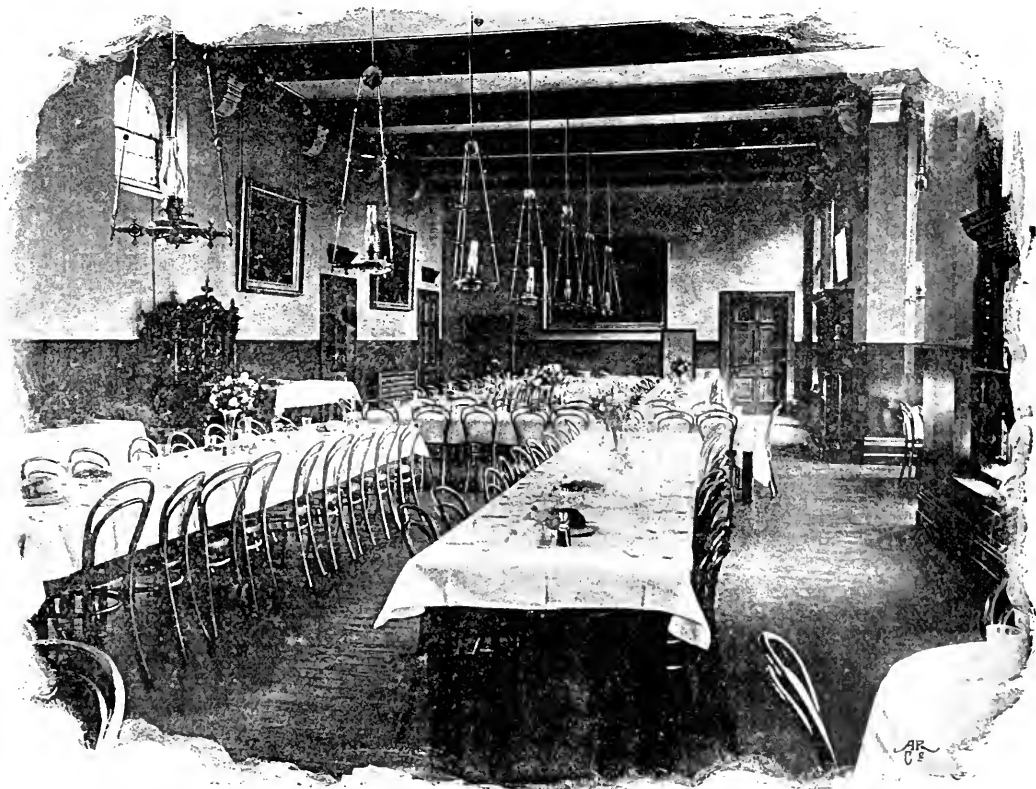
Subject to certain regulations which may be prescribed by the Mistress, girls are allowed to invite friends to join in games in the College grounds and in the Gymnasium, and may entertain friends at luncheon or dinner in Hall, or at tea in their own rooms, at a fixed charge. This indulgence, however, only applies to lady guests, except in the case of a parent or guardian.

the College, without the name of proposer and opposer being known. The openers of the debate may each speak for twenty minutes. The subjects debated upon are of all sorts.

Another of the Societies is the Spontaneous Speaking Society. This is the Debating Society confined to first-year Students, and Students in the first term of their second year.

Visitors are not admitted.

The Fire Brigade is perhaps one of the most important, and is certainly the most amusing, of all the



THE DINING-HALL.

The pleasantest part of the life, however, is perhaps its Social Aspect. The spirit of comradeship is both strengthening and stimulating. Trouble is, as a rule, kept far away from these happy girls. They can work with fervour, and play with zest.

Of course no College could exist in these days without having many Societies. Girton College has won for itself a wide celebrity in this respect. There is the popular Debating Society. This has its President, Vice-President, and Secretary. Motions are sent in to the officers, and chosen by

institutions. This consists of a large majority of the girls. They are divided into three corps, having each a Captain and two Sub-Captains. There is also one supreme Head-Captain, who manages everything. Once or twice a fortnight there is a pump and bucket practice. In the summer, too, there is a window practice, and the officers lower all who will volunteer out of a first-floor window on to the ground by a rope. The knot which is slung round the body was learnt from Captain Shaw.

When the Head Captain chooses, she has an alarm. Four persons in strict secrecy are entrusted with rattles, and at a fixed time they all start from their separate rooms, and whirl these round, running at full speed down the corridors. Every one has to turn out on pain of a shilling fine.

The Farcical Club is also very popular. It gives one or two dramatic performances in the term. The acting is, as a rule, exceedingly well done.

The out-door games at Girton are lawn-tennis—there are both grass and gravel courts—hockey, and golf.

In a recent visit to Girton, I had a long conversation with one of the Principals, who kindly enlightened my ignorance on many points. I asked her to give me her opinion with regard to the result of life at Girton on the girl mind.

"On the whole," I said, "do you think she is improved by it?"

"I do," she answered emphatically. "Her social qualities are brought into play. She is taught to be unselfish—in short, every quality is sharpened. The sense of comradeship here is splendid," she added.

I also asked what the Girton girl does, as a rule, in after life.

"Her training here best fits her for the profession of a teacher in its many branches," was the answer. "Of course a large proportion of our girls marry. There are others, again, who only come here for the sake of the University course,

and do not mean to make any special use of it in the future. But if you look in our report, you will see what many of our old students are now doing. Several of them are Head-Mistresses at different High Schools. Others, again, have left here for good appointments in the United States, Nova Scotia, and other foreign places. They are all doing well from a professional point of view. A Resident-Lecturership at this College, or at one of the other Women's Colleges, is a much-coveted post."

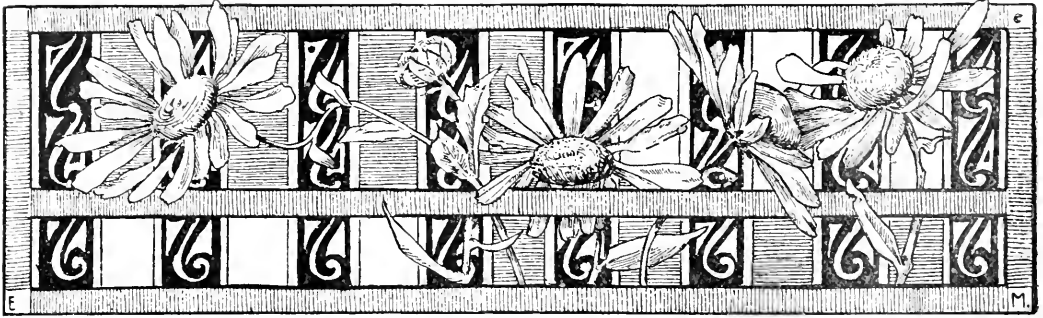
The vexed question of break-down under the strain of hard intellectual work is not regarded as an alarming one at Girton. Girls have, of course, to be watched. Some will read until midnight, and will disregard all premonitory symptoms of over-strain. In short, the result of brain-failure must be due to their own folly. One or two such cases have occurred in the College, but during the last three years there has not been a single example to support the time-honoured theory that women are incapable of using their brains except in the directing of domestic matters.

The Girton girl and her many sisters in the other Colleges are proving more and more every day that Knowledge means Light, and Ignorance Darkness. Being trained to use her intellectual faculties in one direction helps her to use them in others, and if domestic life is to be her happy lot, she will perform her home duties none the worse for being able to solve a problem in Euclid, or construe a Greek sentence.

## GRIEF.

A VISION grew before me from the mist,  
 A woman's wrinkled face, pale, weary-eyed;  
 I turned towards the dawn, by morn new-kissed,  
 But—the shape followed—and a voice that cried—  
 "Look on me! Learn my features one by one!  
 See how the lines about my sad mouth droop!  
 Each furrow marks where the salt tears have run,  
 And heavy loads have made my shoulders stoop.  
 Look on me! Try to love me! We shall meet  
 And dwell together, sharing one poor home!  
 Thou steppest to the sun with eager feet,  
 But where thou goest I will surely come.  
 To-day thou weddest Joy! Yet, list to me,  
 I am the daughter Fate will send to thee."

MARION BUCHANAN.



## A COSTLY FREAK.

BY MAXWELL GRAY,

*Author of "The Silence of Dean Maitland."*

### CHAPTER IX.

THERE is a process known as hushing up—one of the most disastrous, probably, ever devised by mortal man ; for it is in the essence of a really good scandal that, the more it is hushed up, the more powerfully does it bruit itself about, buzzing here and hissing there in acrid, inaccurate whispers that penetrate where clear-toned truth could never pierce and find hearing.

Old port was one of the whispers concerning Mr. Ray that hissed most virulently through Freshford, buzzing about shops and cottage doors, round tea-pots of various moulds—from the black earthenware of Grannie Jones, the Britannia metal and porcelain of more comfortable folk, to the pretentious electro-plate, the unpretending solid silver of the Victorian era, plain and chased, and choice varieties of antique, Georgian and even Queen Anne—old port was the word, the venomous sibilation of which gave zest to numerous decoctions of the most soothing leaf grown on mortal tree, brewed in these various vessels and sipped by mortals of various degree. Who could have thought that old port had power over such a soul ? That a temptation so banal, so limited, was yet mighty to hurl one from such high summits to the trodden and desecrating dust ?

Nor did the rancous whisper circle about the genial odours of the harmless tea-board only ; it hissed among fragrant clouds from another more pernicious weed, loved of the male portion of mankind, and amid the fumes of more powerful and in-

spiring beverages than that borrowed from the Asian celestials. It floated through mists arising from the homely, but indispensable wash-tub, and those emanating from the yet more necessary saucepan ; it circled round dinner-tables *à la mode*, and those *à la bourgeoisie Britannique* : it became a sneer and a chuckle in sumptuous Carabasian dining-rooms, and a sigh through groups of ladies, in their after-dinner moments in drawing-rooms, which their male belongings beguiled in prized seclusion from ears feminine. Its primary source was the neighbour who nursed that Perkins, whose death-bed Mr. Ray so assiduously watched ; this woman averred that she knew by unmistakable symptoms that the poor curate had been drinking port wine before taking his station at the death-bed. The parish clerk had perceived it more than once by the same token in the vestry ; parishioners, spying through the window of the dingy parlour by daylight, had seen the curate recklessly drinking wine with his son. Truly there is no smoke without fire, but a very poor little fire is sometimes responsible for an amazing quantity of smoke.

Freshford folk knew now how to account for the sudden eloquence of a hesitating, prosy preacher. Also for trembling hands and sudden accesses of indisposition and occasional tottering gait. "Very sad," people said, not without a certain unctuous satisfaction. "Very sad ! In such a position ! Who could have thought it ?"

These things were hinted even to George Burroughes, whose indignation at the aspersion was the

more tempestuous, because of the deadly echo the thing found in his inmost sickened heart. He had never supposed that affairs would have come to an actual arrest, else he would have acted differently. His letter gave fullest warning and amplest means of avoiding any such extremity. To the last moment, the very last moment, when he saw the unfortunate man fall with those agonised words of self-condemnation, George had hoped, rather than expected, some satisfying explanation of black-looking circumstances. But that cry, wrung from the conscience-stricken man, shattered his hopes, broke his trust in human perfectibility, and even shook his faith: it was as the knell of a whole ruined world to him. And though he never intended to prosecute, he had thought it well, in the dreaded case of actual guilt, to give a sound and wholesome fright and also to convey the culprit to a safe distance, both from parish and family, who would all, in every way, be benefited by his removal.

But now that regret was too late, he deeply regretted this course of action, and imagined many ways out of the difficulty, judging by results. But the scandal could not be entirely hushed up at this late moment. Mrs. Ray's ashen face and stony glance cut accusingly to the quick of his heart, and he felt that the old man's quivering mouth and agonised cry would haunt him till his dying day.

Mr. Ray's house was searched. A twenty pound note was found, hidden in a spring drawer in the poor curate's own private desk, and easily identified as one of the missing notes by its number.

Mrs. Ray was present at this finding, and, to George's grief, she betrayed no surprise—perhaps the stony horror on her rigid face was too great to be increased; and it could not be surpassed. She raised no objection to the search, not even asking to see the warrant for it, but looked on as at some expected inevitable event; so she might have looked on had the world been falling to pieces. She did not appear surprised, even during the inspection of the old-fashioned walnut bureau, with its slanting desk top that let down and disclosed writing conveniences, when, in the bottom drawer, always unlocked and the acknowledged public receptacle for all manner of odds and ends—knots of twine thriftily taken from parcels and hoarded for use, corks, wrapping paper, odd magazines, buttons, tin-tacks, circulars made and to be

made into spills, card-board boxes, broken bits of china and wood-work, a few old children's toys, scraps of cloth and list for gardening, packets of seeds, ends of window cord, and disabled back-broken books—a morocco letter-case, bearing the initials G.R.B., was discovered alongside of an old sermon-case of Mr. Ray's, similarly marked with other initials. Some letters still remained in the case, together with the rector's long-lost, half-written sermon and a receipted bill. Another letter, beginning "Dear George," was found in another part of this drawer. The letter-case was in the outer part of the drawer at the bottom, buried beneath an old card-board almanack, and a good-sized portfolio containing drawings in poor Walter's "early manner."

There was a careful carelessness about the disposal of these things that finally clinched the obvious argument as to how they came there, and put all doubt, as well as hope, from George's mind.

After that first conscious-stricken cry, Mr. Ray said nothing. With returning consciousness he looked with dumb anguish into the face bending over him, and read his condemnation in his wife's unfamiliar gaze and rigid lips. Never before had such looks passed between these two, never had they imagined it possible to exchange glances so terrible. The poor stricken wife had loosened her husband's collar and rendered him all necessary services to recall him to consciousness after his fainting, but she said nothing, and he missed the accustomed tenderness of her touch, a lack of which she was probably unaware, and something seemed to give way within his heart and vanish. After that one dreadful exchange of glances, he turned his head away and closed his eyes again, like one smitten by mortal anguish who would fain look no more upon the woeful world.

George thought he had fainted again, and was for giving more stimulant, but Mrs. Ray knew better, and silently put away the offered glass he had hastily procured with some of the sensations he supposed peculiar to murderers, at the sight of the agonized droop of that grey and once honoured head.

But Mr. Ray soon unclosed his grieved eyes again, and looked about him as one dazed by excess of misery, assenting to the suggestion that he had recovered by a sign of the head. When again asked if he had anything to say, and again

cautioned as to the result of saying it, he replied in the same dumb fashion. George could not meet that helpless, hurt gaze; it reminded him of the mute, amazed reproach in the eyes of a suffering dumb animal, nor could he bear the air of utter hopeless bewilderment with which the old man went through the subsequent scenes. He seemed to be stunned and stupefied by his trouble. The only circumstance that witnessed to his comprehension of what had befallen him, was his silently taking from his pocket and handing to George his own letter of the evening before, containing the three ten-pound notes.

George's first action on Mr. Ray's arrest—to him unexpected, since he had sent for him to the Parish Room to explain and receive explanations in the matter of the traced note, and supposed that the constables would delay the apprehension till that was over—was to try to quash the proceedings at once. But this could not so easily be done. The affair was no longer in his hands, but in those of the police. Not only was the warrant for his apprehension issued, and the note traced, but the man was actually in custody. The prosecution could not be withdrawn, even though he should refuse to prosecute, except at the discretion of magistrates.

"I wish that beast, Carabas, had never given me those accursed notes," groaned George next day, with singular injustice and want of logic, "then it would never have happened. You were right, Maud, in blaming me for taking unholy money for Church purposes."

"Come, George, the money wasn't unholy, and I was only taking the poor marquis at your valuation, which was not quite fair."

"Well no, it wasn't, after all. I don't suppose he is worse than others, but one must blame somebody in misery like this. For pity's sake don't deprive me of that poor comfort. Think of the solace it would be to be able to knock somebody down!"

"My good George, that would be better than slandering beneficent marquises behind their backs. What a pity the devil is gone out of fashion! People used to blame him when things went wrong, though I don't think it was quite fair."

"To blame whom, my dear?" asked innocent Mrs. Burroughes, whose second handkerchief was

now wet through with grief and sympathy.

"Oh, the devil!" replied George, with an absent-minded impatience that startled his poor mother into false conclusions.

"Flippancy was never more inappropriate than in this case, Maud," he added. "The fact is it was my fault. I ought to have raised his stipend. I might have known. It is not right to tempt people by exposing them to such poverty. Oh, but *that* man——"

"It will all come right," Maud broke in, with an air of cheerful finality. "My colours are still flying. Of course you can't prosecute, but don't try to hush it up. In the first place you can't."

"But, Maud, the scandal to the Church," pleaded Mrs. Burroughes.

"The Church," replied George, "is above scandal. She can amply vindicate her own honour. But the man—oh, the man! and his—his family!" Here was a catch in his breath and some strong feeling that made him rise from the chair in which he was extended in an attitude peculiar to masculine misery, with legs stretched full length before him, chin on breast, bent back, and pocketed hands, and pace the sunny library, in which they were holding family conclave. "It is too much."

"Precisely," said his cousin, whose large, dilating, pansy eyes were darker and more velvety than ever to-day. "For the sake of the man and his innocent family the matter ought to be cleared up, fully investigated. If I were in his position I should demand a public examination."

"You *do* stand by a fellow," George replied wistfully. "But that won't clear him, unluckily. Nothing can destroy fact—not even faith, which removes mountains."

"I am sure we would all give half we possess, if we could," added his mother.

"We need give nothing," returned Maud, in her spirited way. "Surely you both *know* that Mr. Ray could not do such a thing. You are rather shaky on miracles, Geordie, yet such a deed on his part would be a miracle of the first water. Now, will you have the goodness to tell me why he did not take advantage of your letter of warning? Oh, call him mad or desperate, if you like, but, believe me, no man capable of the outrageous action of picking a guest's pocket would have missed that chance."

"Oh, but you forget—you forget the main, the



piteous temptation, the poor boy!" he returned, with half a sob, "he wouldn't leave the boy."

The velvety eyes clouded, the nimble tongue hesitated for once. "Ah, don't think that, dear George. I tell you he *didn't do* it. Oh, it will all come out presently. You may stake your pile on that," she added in her light, laughing way, and with a voice that made the borrowed slang almost a charm.

"Well," returned George, looking at his watch, "I'll go straight to Morrison Munn now, and see what pressure I can put upon *him*. As for Leveson, I fear he's no go. Somehow poor old Ray has contrived to set all these fellows' backs up, and they all hang together, Carabas and all."

"Yes," sighed Mrs. Burroughes, when her son was gone, "poor Mr. Ray *is* unpopular. There is certainly something wrong about him. I felt that from the first."

"He is unpopular with that set, Aunt Carrie, because he makes them conscious of their own moral inferiority. And you, and I, and George hate to hear sermons about Scarlet Women, sudden conversions, and Sabbath breaking. Do you think Elijah was popular with the Justice Shallows of his time?"

"Really, my dear child——"

The "dear child" had vanished with her last fiery question, leaving her aunt to ponder upon the singular out-spokenness and lack of reverence displayed by the newly-risen female generation, and the black abysses of ruin that probably awaited them in consequence.

"Poor dear George!" said the dear child to herself, after a few seconds passed in the shadow of her handkerchief, "as if I couldn't see churches by daylight! No doubt he respected Mr. Ray's character. Who could do otherwise—but—but—oh! I know where the sting lies. He's so very human. Oh, George, George, you have your revenge now, if you only knew it! Oh, yes; I led you on, I played with you, tormented you, made fun of you, laughed at your sufferings—tiresome, downright blundering old George! It's singular when one comes to think of it. Perhaps one has a weakness for one's own property, or one gets to like people by dint of tormenting them. But George Burroughes, of all men! And I so sure of myself, so free of weakness. Well, I'm paid out now, and no mistake!"

George refused to offer evidence in the matter of the lost notes. He privately represented the impropriety of publishing an old man's weakness, and bringing scandal upon the Church; he urged the probability of some mental aberration, temporary or otherwise—but he urged in vain. Mr. Ray's previous unpopularity had been intensified by his retention in his charge against the wishes of the Carabasian faction—that lordly and luxurious set, who felt themselves entitled, by some divine right, to the best, the modish best, of everything, including parsons, and who could not even say their prayers without some caressing of senses, some flattering of cultivated tastes, substituting music and flowers, comely ritual and tasteful expression of the misery of sinners, for those cosy little parlours, cushioned and curtained off from inferior sinners, and warmed by special little grates, in which their forbears confessed their iniquities. This set were scandalised at being put off with a curate so far behind the times, who spoilt the intoning, used the wrong shibboleth, preached old-fashioned proses, simply did not exist as a social unit, and considered Carabasian sins and country-gentlemen iniquities of no more moment than the transgressions of farmers, shop-keepers, and day-labourers. For is it in any degree fit or natural that people whose daily bread is decorated, and whose daily living is sumptuous, should put up with inferior and unpleasing adjuncts to public worship?

These worthy folk had often maintained that Mr. Ray would do very well for a remote country village, but was really not good and advanced enough for a large parish like Freshford, containing so many "good"—indeed, "best"—people. It was bad enough that their spiritual palates were displeased, and their souls un comforted by the ministrations of this rejected and ineffectual curate, but great, indeed, was the horror of Sir Munn Morrison-Munn and Mr. Leveson, to say nothing of that of the injured marquis, at the hypocrisy that had cloaked the man's positive rascality in the guise of an excessive religiosity, and the blasphemy that had exulted over successful crime as answered prayer. They felt it a sacred duty to society to bring crime so hateful to just punishment and public execration, especially the marquis. He was not really a marquis, nor was his actual name Carabas, but that is by the way. The marquis.

felt that for this pernicious curate to steal the very money intended to procure his dismissal, was a fiendish refinement of iniquity, it was like seething a kid in its mother's milk, he observed to an intimate friend. Carabas was not a justice of the peace, it is true, but his influence over those functionaries was great.

Then poor Honeybun had to be considered. He was but just returned from a period of unwilling sojourn at his country's expense, and had to make an honest name for himself in the teeth of public prejudice. If he was to have been prosecuted, how unjust to suffer the greater sinner to go free?

The case was therefore proceeded with, George Burroughes deriving a gloomy consolation from the reflection that the scandal of the suspicion and the traced notes alone, had brought the poor curate to ruin so complete that even a committal for trial at the assizes could not increase it.

## CHAPTER X.

It was the day of the magisterial enquiry, a bleak and bitter March afternoon, with a cloudless sky of a certain hard metallic lustre and that steady breadth of bright sunlight which, in conjunction with the pitiless searching east wind, has the effect of a cruelly sarcastic smile.

Though it was Saturday, Mrs. Ray was unoccupied. She sat alone in the parlour by the frugal, ineffectual fire, with some pretence of plain sewing in her hand, and gazed blankly out of window at the clouds of dust rolling by on wind-gusts, and watched the budding trees across the road bend and shudder to their onset, with hopeless eyes. She shivered by the pinched fire, cowering over it in a way foreign to her Spartan habits, as if the chill of the savage wind had cut into her heart.

The familiar room had a desolate air. Walter's couch, vacated only that morning, already had the forlorn aspect of long disuse; the house was very still, empty of all but herself, even Bella being absent on an errand. Walter was gone to Bournemouth in charge of a sweet-faced nurse for a month; his mother scarcely knew why or wherefore in the heavy anguish that crushed her: someone, she was aware, had offered to take the boy and amuse and nurse

him, some friend of Miss Ascott's, she vaguely understood, and it seemed slightly to lessen the awful burden of life to have the poor lad safe in good hands for a time, away from the crushing sorrows of that desecrated hearth. The fact that she scarcely gave a thought to the benefit this sojourn in the mild, pine-scented sea air would be to the boy, witnessed to the intensity of her grief.

But even now the binding force of long habit asserted itself, so that she found herself anxious lest her husband should not return in time for the sermon that every Saturday produced as regularly as night brings stars. Sermons would now no more be required of Mr. Ray, he had no longer any right to exercise the calling she held so holy and to which he had been especially consecrated and set apart by every thought and word of his daily life, and by every hope and aspiration they had shared together. William had fallen: who could stand? He had fallen, not as the weak fall daily, rising again and stumbling on as before with but feeble consciousness of having even tripped, but deeply, irrecoverably, from the topmost height of sanctity into lowest depths of banal criminality, toppled from that airy inapproachable summit by the most obvious and inevitable of temptations: it was as if the sky had fallen.

Yet she felt the piteousness of it; her eyes were scalded by scant salt tears at the thought of Walter's need, and his father's helplessness to succour him. She knew his wistful, perpetual solicitude for this one long-desired son. Had he deceived himself in that impious giving of thanks for the fruit of his own iniquity? Had the wearied, worn brain given way under stress of a lot too hard? Too well she remembered his journey to Wilchester with the fatal banknote—the existence of which was so carefully concealed from her who shared his inmost thoughts—the vague way in which on his return he accounted for the purchase of unaccustomed luxuries, his emotion on hearing of that shower of anonymous gifts, the arrival of which rendered his crime unnecessary, and particularly she remembered that sudden seizure of faintness to which he had never been subject. She also remembered with humiliation his hypocritical censure of her own worldly anxiety and lack of faith. She had loved him with the love of youth; she had lived with him in



her riper years, years of harvested experience and clear mental vision, for over a quarter of a century, and she had never doubted him, never attributed any fault to the object of her whole-hearted reverence and devotion until the moment which wrecked her world, when she broke unsummoned upon the scene of the arrest and heard his cry of anguish and bitter remorse.

She knew sorrow well; care had long been her housemate; privation, her bosom friend; joy was a rare and haughty guest, whose angel-visits left him but half known; hope, the dearest friend of man, and the last to desert him, had still been hers till her husband's confession struck the hour of his flight. Trouble such as this was hard to conceive; it had never entered into the most remotely -imagined possibilities of life; yet there it was, grim and ghastly, impossible to ignore, staring her blankly and boldly in the face with its petrifying Gorgon gaze; all her landmarks were swept away, and her beacons' darkness. She had leant so long on the saintly soul which companioned her pilgrimage through life, that she could scarcely so much as lift her eyes to those heavenly hills whence cometh man's help, without him who might not lift hither his sin-darkened gaze, and who, set to guide others, had himself gone so far astray.

William a criminal! alas! alas! the dizzying distance between sanctity and crime! Her children's father, the husband of whom she had deemed herself so unworthy, a castaway!

Mrs. Burroughes had come an hour before, Mrs. Ray could imagine with what feelings for her, "the poor wife." She recalled her own half-scornful pity of criminals' families, of that poor Mrs. Honeybun, for instance, whom it was impossible to dissociate from the convicted criminal, her husband, of whose misdeeds she was inferred to have been cognizant. She remembered taking a little good book to "that poor Mrs. Honeybun" and shuddered. She was now "that poor Mrs. Ray." Kind-hearted Mrs. Burroughes had called, and could not be denied, because there was no one but herself to open the door. Nor had Mrs. Burroughes left room for a denial; she had simply walked in on the door being opened, and burst into tears.

"My dear," she said, "I could not stay away. I could not, my dear, my dear!"

She kissed the grieved face, unresponsive in its

pain, and, taking the afflicted woman's hand in her own, sat beside her, gently stroking the listless hand and crying softly. But she did not say much.

"You are kind," was all Mrs. Ray could say in reply. "Comfort? There is no comfort."

"There is hope, my dear," Mrs. Burroughes said. "Do try to hope—to hope for the best."

"There is no hope," Mrs. Ray replied, with absolute calm, "and there is no best."

Mrs. Burroughes could think of nothing else to say. She knew but little of Mrs. Ray, having only met her during the last few months at various parish meetings and in the formal calls the two ladies exchanged at decent intervals; for Mrs. Ray never dined out, and never entertained, for obvious reasons.

All the time of this friendly visit poor Mrs. Ray was conscious of her husband standing in public before the magistrates, accused of a shameful thing that could not be denied. What hope, what comfort was there in heaven above or earth beneath to medicine shame and anguish such as this? How could this be the will of a Heavenly Father? Repentance? Repentance could not regain his lost eminence, or give him back his right to exercise his calling. There was nowhere any balm of consolation for this afflicted wife.

As she sat by the small fire, the old-fashioned walnut bureau was aggressively visible to her, a silent witness to an incredible but too real thing. She had seen it and touched it daily, dusting and rubbing its dark polish with dainty care, ignorant of what lay hidden there. And what a feeble, ineffectual hiding! How awful to think of the grey head bent stealthily over the drawer in that pitiful attempt at concealment! In imagination she saw the furtive gaze, the guilty starting at every sound, the trembling hands clumsily covering up the witness to his degradation, and then, the pitiful concealment achieved, she pictured him sitting tranquilly in his accustomed place, reading from the well-worn Bible, to-day unopened on its shelf, praying, chatting in his cheerful, affectionate way at table, uttering gentle jokes and kindly rebukes, bastioned by his theological tomes in a stronghold of enforced silence—all in sight of that fatal drawer in the bureau which was gleaming now in the sunlight like a cynical smile

Ah ! she remembered something more : she remembered their talk on the night before the arrest, when he had spoken so feelingly of the unknown thief, as of one who had fallen from spotless living under stress of some grievous, irresistible temptation, and his own children had unconsciously reproached him as one with guilty knowledge of the crime.

So she sat and suffered by her ruined hearth. She was still comely but for the habitual over-anxiety that had indelibly marred her face and aged her beyond her years : her features were delicately cut, her dark eyes, the light and colour of which were faded and dimmed, witnessed to former beauty, one saw at first glance that the drawn, downward droop of the mouth was not native to it : but only her husband remembered the dimples which ready laughter had been used to trace about the corners of full crimson lips, and the pink roundness of the now hollow, colourless cheeks.

In the heavy anguish that stunned her and made her indifferent even to the wrecking of her children's future, many past things rose up before her, long-silent voices spoke : her father's anger at her favour of the penniless young curate ; his fulmination against the engagement ; refusal of consent to a marriage so far beneath her ; the luxurious home, happy family life, wide interests, social pleasures, and indulgence of cultured and refined tastes ; her rejected suitors ; her sisters' marriages ; her own youthful romance and life-long loyalty ; her long, long waiting, while her flower of youth faded, her heart wasted, her beauty withered and her hair grew grey, all for William's sake—all rose unbidden in her paralysed thoughts.

Her father, though wealthy, had a large family and lived up to his income, reckoning upon the good marriages his numerous and well-connected daughters were in a position to make, and leaving little for them after his death. Yet that little, which had made the belated marriage possible, was gone, and the pretty, merry, accomplished Edith Sheldon, the star of so much admiration, the object of so much desire, whose chief failing was the pride of good birth, so daintily-nurtured, so warmly sheltered, was unrecognisable in the grey-faced, careworn woman, with work-roughened hands, whose days wasted slowly in a household

drudgery, to which her ignorance and lack of training added a burden and sting.

Much sorrow had come to her married life ; reared as she had been, it was very hard to see her girls grow up one after the other and go out into the cold, hard world to work for their own livelihood, having missed all the advantages and pleasures her own girlhood had known : then the poor boy—the one son—what a blight was there ! But all the sorrows and privations, losses and denials of her life, were light as air in comparison with this crushing, incredible grief ; love and loyalty, devotion and reverence, had been hers till now : the meanest and dullest household task had been sweetened and glorified by devotion to one so worthy : but the idol being overthrown and her life-long devotion insulted, there seemed to be no longer any motive for existing.

Cinders tinkled from the grate, and were mechanically replaced ; sunbeams slid from bough to bough, shadows lengthened with gentle sweetness, winds howled more viciously, as if conscious that every day blunted their sting : Mrs. Ray sat on, bowed by bitter grief, and saw no comfort anywhere.

Vainly did the kitten play off her prettiest pranks and put on her sweetest airs : she was not seen. The little dog and his master, her play-mates, being away, she was reduced to toying with sunbeams, springing at shadows of passing birds, worrying curtains, and fleeing in feigned panic from imaginary terrors. Having snatched the neglected needlework from Mrs. Ray's listless hands, tossed it, rolled in it, and left it, she seated herself, demure and thoughtful, on the table by the work-basket, busily hatching wicked schemes in her small brain. Advancing a deliberate marauding paw, she drew out a reel of cotton and rolled it, with dainty pats and agile leaps, over the table's edge, the gravity on her small, brindled face relaxing when it bounded merrily on to the floor, eliciting a crow of delight by the sound of its fall. Packets of needles and pins, papers of buttons, and rolls of tape, were deftly picked out by the grey paw and consigned to the same fate, until the basket and all its contents lay tossed and tangled and tumbled up together on the floor in a heap on which the busy kitten leapt and danced and rolled until, wearied with this unholy mirth, it stretched itself at full length and slept

with little gurgles and sighs of content, all unobserved by the sad human eyes beholding it.

It was only when Bella tumbled into the room with a kettle and an exclamation, that Mrs. Ray roused herself and began absently putting things straight, the unabashed Muffie turning over, chin upwards, with closed eyes and curled up paws, inviting a caress though too lazy to demand one. The small, soft miscreant seemed an embodiment of the lost happiness and gaiety of home, and its mischief symbolic of the chaos into which all homely duties and interests had fallen. Mrs. Ray's hand, instinctively raised to smite, was arrested in mid-air—for who can resist a kitten's graceful wiles?—the culprit was seen through a blur of tears, the avenging hand descended in a caress. Never again would Mrs. Ray smile at a kitten's gambols; never again put any heart into the much serving for which she had so often been rebuked; never again be careful and troubled about many things. But she could still cry and cry, and the gentle tears, falling softly upon the arid ground of her heart, drew from it as with April balmy showers, a sweet and fertile up-springing of prayer.

It took some minutes' undivided attention to unravel, wind, fold, collect from corners and pick up the scattered contents of the basket, interrupted by the kitten, busily watching every movement with pricked ears, bristling whiskers, and grave, intelligent bright eyes. But the effort effected a wholesome mental diversion, the bringing of order into external things in some measure quieted the disorder within, and the handling of homely habitual things produced the usual calming effect, and Mrs. Ray resumed her seat by the fire a little later in a gentler and more healthy frame of mind, the bitter resentment rising within her giving way to pity and sorrow. She wept long—so long and with such heart-break that the keen edge of her pain was blunted by bodily languor, and she grew drowsy, having waked all night and scarcely touched food all day. Perhaps she dozed a little, for she found herself grieving for long-forgotten sorrows and smiling at long-silent mirth. Faces of old friends, old sayings, old scenes came back to her.

She saw her old home in the sunshine of a sun half a century younger than this; she always thought of it as in sunshine—an antique gabled

manor house, with stone mullioned Tudor windows, and jutting porch half buried in myrtles and passion-flower—saw her mother sitting on a rustic bench on the terrace; herself, a little child, playing on the sward at her feet. The peacock came strutting along the terrace, rearing his splendid fan of a tail; she saw all the great eyes in it change in the sunlight, and the flash of his slender blue-green neck; the sun-dial rose behind him clasped by a flowering creeper; she remembered her long-forgotten great terror of the great bird. She found herself creeping timorously to her mother's knee, dropping the daisy chains and burying a small round face in the sheltering arm, heard her father's genial laugh at little Mimi's fright—Mimi, the pet name unheard for fifty years, sounded through the lonely silence in ghost-like syllables; there was the memory of a blue sash, a necklace of blue beads—a great yearning devoured her heart:—

“Mother, come back from the echoless shore,  
Take me again to your heart as of yore!”

The mother's long-buried face again, bending anxiously above her when she was returning to consciousness after a nasty fall in the hunting-field; she had been dragged, entangled in the long-flowing habit of those days. The habit was dark blue. That fiery chestnut was her brother's; its name was Spider. A balmy blue midnight rose next, full of dance-music and flowers, laughter and bright eyes; her gown was of pale pink with pearls; faint murmurs of admiration followed “the dark-eyed girl in pink.” Gerald had been there, tortured with jealousy. Such a fine, soldierly lad, blue-eyed, fair-haired, frank, so desperately in love—too desperately—she had often thought she might have cared more if he had cared less. He had obtained leave to “speak again” when he came home. But Gerald never came home. She heard the thunder of cannon, screams of horses, cries of men; saw the smoke clouds roll asunder, the flash of the lad's drawn sabre and the gleam of his blue eyes as he rode up to the Russian guns and fell, his gay uniform and her last letter beneath it stained with blood.

“Long shall the tale be told,  
Yea, when our babes are old.”

Then the face of her dying child, the arms outstretched, the glazing eyes, the last faint cry of “mother.” The manor-house again, the young clergyman whose refined features and gentle

manner contrasted with the brown, strong faces and frank hearty ways of her soldier and sailor brothers—the sailor went down in the Captain. The peacock strutting in the sun again, with the great arch full of shining eyes stiff behind him.

A low, soft sound accompanied all these memories; it was the kitten purring with closed eyes on the arm of her chair. Joy and mirth still existed.

Walter did not yet know; he had been bewildered by his sudden journey without his father to see him off and bid him good-bye; it was the first time she had done anything without the father's advice and consent; even Millie did not know. She was with her father—poor Millie!—before the magistrates. Had there been anything between Millie and Mr. Burroughes? Poor children! Their one inheritance was their father's standing and reputation; poor, innocent children!

People passed and re-passed in the road; all turned and looked curiously at the windows: a dog-cart flashed by in a whirl of dust: it was Mr. Leveson returning from the town from judging her husband; seagulls sailed slowly seawards, their cream-white bodies and strong sword-like wings showing against the blue sky, into which the pale saffron of evening was stealing—night or noon was all the same now; there could be no comfort—but poor Millie would return with night, and life must somehow be faced. Footsteps on the hard road, two figures in the yellow sunshine walking slowly, casting long shadows before them: one was her husband, walking in the public road in open day.

She had not contemplated his return, nor had an acquittal seemed possible to her. The one blank, black fact of present proven crime and probable future punishment loomed too large in her mind to leave room for details. And now that he was there at liberty, of what avail was it? His ruin was still absolute: nothing could undo his crime or wipe out his disgrace. He walked with a feeble, trailing gait, supported by Millie, whose hand was on his arm; the yellow sunbeams gilded his grey hair as if in mockery; his head was bowed in misery too deep for shame. An agony of pity came over her when she saw the frail, bowed figure: had she been hard to him, not even desiring his escape from punishment?

She hastened to the door and opened it, trying

to frame some sentence of welcome, and Mr. Ray, pausing a moment as if doubtful if he had any right to cross his own threshold, looked up, face to face with an anguish deeper than his own.

The three went silently into the familiar room, missing the little dog's bark and the figure on the couch.

Millie drew up an arm-chair for her father and placed him in it; and it came over Mrs. Ray that there was something new in Millie: her eyes were brilliant, lips firm, and cheeks with two bright red spots: she moved in a different way, and began to rouse and build up the dull, dying fire, with a slight frown.

"Father is tired, cold, and hungry," she said gently. "You did not expect him, mother?"

"No, my dear, no: I did not. You bring good news, dear William, I hope?" she added, with an effort to resume the old affectionate tone.

"Bad news," replied Millie, dashing away some indignant tears, "disgraceful news. Those miserable little Justice Shallows have committed him for trial, the wretches!"

"Nay, my dear, nay: they could do no other," he corrected gently. "I have indeed been most kindly and considerably dealt with. I had not ventured to hope for bail: and the sums are considerable. For that I am indebted to George Burroughes and our good Mr. Lowell, of Wynn Farm."

"It is absurd," cried Millie, vigorously plying the poker and producing a fitful, reluctant blaze, "but it will all come right at the assizes."

## CHAPTER XI.

GEORGE BURROUGHES did all the Sunday duty unaided next day in a ghastly isolation that pained him by its constant reminder of the gentle presence and familiar grey head of the beloved curate. He was ashamed to stand up before the congregation with the consciousness of the cause of Mr. Ray's absence, and vexed to see that the church was unusually full, probably of those singular beings whose curiosity is stimulated or satisfied by merely visiting the scenes and associations of painful events.

While reading his own carefully-written and conscientious discourse, he felt that all the arches and pillars were echoing and vibrating with Mr.

Ray's inspired and enthusiastic sermon on prayer. *Could* that have been hypocrisy? If *that* were false, nothing could be true. But how if the old man's brain were warped and he had been the victim of his own disordered imagination? That was but too probable, and in that case there was no earthly salvation for him, and nothing but utter ruin for his wife and family. And if, as seemed probable, Mr. Ray were but a visionary, the slave of his own wild fancies, how about the seers of old and the supernatural generally? As his cousin had said, George was anything but strong upon the supernatural, and liked to treat miracles in a symbolic light when constrained to preach upon them: the soul of a mystic was to him an unexplored country, wherein was no discoverable pathway, the ministry of angels a subject beyond his mental grasp.

Always averse to personal and passing topics, he had chosen the subject of his morning sermon with care, in view of avoiding anything that could be construed by parishioners as remotely bearing upon the crying scandal of poor Mr. Ray's appearance before magistrates. But, unfortunately, it was an old sermon and quite forgotten, and while delivering it in a lame and half-hearted way, his attention divided by memories of another sermon spoken in another and more eloquent voice from that same pulpit, he was suddenly and completely taken aback to find himself struggling through some remarks to the effect that none should be censured for the faults of others, and that, though a hard world branded the criminal's child with inherited disgrace, it was otherwise in the sight of kind Heaven, who judged each soul upon its individual merit, saying that the soul that sinned should surely die, and he who turned from his wickedness should save his soul alive.

Perhaps he might have uttered these sentences without thinking of their frightful applicability to present events, had it not chanced that, in the turmoil of his troubled thoughts, he raised his eyes from the manuscript, gazing straight before him, and saw, sitting alone and isolated in the Ray's accustomed place, Millie, very pale and unlike herself, looking up, as was but right and proper, at the preacher, with what he fancied was pained reproach in her glance. He turned red and stammered badly, then white and came to a dead stop, and then, fluttering the leaves wildly, missed a page without

knowing it, and landed himself prematurely at the end of the discourse, inwardly condoling with himself as the most unlucky mortal on the face of the earth.

He had not bargained for Millie's presence at all, much less in conjunction with such ill-timed remarks, nor, indeed, had anyone supposed that she would have the courage—some people said brazenness—to appear in public, especially so soon, and after the previous day's experiences, when she had stood by her father before the magistrates. But Millie would have risen from her death-bed to appear at church on that morning, since to stay at home would have meant to accept her father's imputed disgrace. She would not so much as wear a veil, nor would she seek a less conspicuous place in the church than that she was accustomed to occupy, not far from the pulpit, and on a line with the Burroughes household. Nor did she hesitate to exchange small talk with friends on the road to church, and, as her going was timed to coincide with the thickest stream of worshippers, it chanced that her greetings were manifold, as well as cheerful and urbane. On that day Millie definitely bade farewell to her girlish shyness, and acquired a distinctive manner of her own.

For her, everything had reached a climax and then begun to fall back into chaos on that Thursday night, when she gave George's letter into her father's hands, by the kitchen fire, with such blissful agitation and rainbow-tinted hope. How happy she had been then, and how long, how very long ago, that hour seemed! As for that girl, that blind, deluded girl, who found George Burroughes waiting beneath the thorn, and walked down into the sunset with him in a fool's paradise, she seemed to have died long ago with those mistaken hopes and fond imaginings. That was Millie Ray, an ignorant and inexperienced child, beguiled by the tender pity in a kind man's voice into romantic dreams it made her hot to think of, though it seemed so long ago, in another world, a beautiful, impossible world, the gates of which were now for ever closed to her. Mr. Burroughes had a warm, kind heart: perhaps his heart was better than his head else he would have taken that letter himself to her father, and she had mistaken his friendly concern for her troubles.

But when first she understood it, when, as that

black Friday wore away and she heard nothing of the contents of the letter and slowly gathered that they did not affect her personally, her pain and humiliation had been great and very bitter. For there is a strange, unwritten code which makes it penal for a girl to cherish false hopes and be deceived. A man keeps his dignity under the cruellest flout, but a woman is humiliated by the smallest misconception. Perhaps this code is as silly as it is unjust: it is certainly artificial. Then, in the unexpected and awful blow levelled at her father, Millie and her girlish grief and romance died, but Millicent was born, Millicent, who had no personal hope or fear, and only existed to care for those more deeply-stricken ones who needed her so sorely, to whom George Burroughes was her father's rector and unwilling enemy, nothing more—nothing, in spite of words and tones echoing from the far-off sunshiny afternoon on the downs.

She had now two aims in life: one, not to give in to a broken heart, the other to champion her father to the utmost and maintain his honour before the world.

Freshford folk were exasperated at what they called the brazen behaviour of Miss Ray, and it must be confessed that she showed small consideration for the innocent pleasures of the congregation by thus appearing in their midst just as the first irrecoverable bloom of the scandal was being enjoyed. For what else could people be discussing as they mingled together and loitered through the churchyard after morning service? And who would not be annoyed and disconcerted at being interrupted in well-prepared conversational climaxes, such as the description of the arrest, or in such comments as "Those poor Rays," "So sad for the family," "Not a shadow of doubt—instantly committed for trial," "Terrible hypocrisy," "No one knows how long it may have been going on," "And people do say, etc.," by the close proximity of "that poor Miss Ray's" pale, determined, young face.

Poor Lady Morrison-Munn was amongst the chief sufferers by Millie's brazen defiance of public opinions and convenience. This ill-starred lady, who had finally declined Miss Ray as governess to her children, on the day before the arrest, in consequence of "distressing circumstances," was lamenting with profound self-pity to Mr. Leveson, the magistrate on whose warrant Mr.

Ray had been arrested, on the way to her carriage, the inconvenience of having to hunt up another governess and the advantages afforded by Miss Ray's living within walking distance: and, being one of those very great small people who regard the section of mankind not in their own little class as dust of the earth and less than nothing, blocked the churchyard gate in loud discussion of her wrongs, with sublime indifference to the fact that much live human dust and nothingness, desirous of returning to its Sunday dinner, was accumulating behind her, until the sudden perception of Millie's face, quite close to her own, caused her to smother a small shriek.

Millie would have passed on, after a calm "Good morning," but that the miserable Lady Morrison-Munn, inspired by some demon to patronize "that poor Miss Ray," extended an effusive hand, which was, of course, civilly, though coldly, accepted by the patronized damsel.

"*Dear Miss Ray,*" she said sweetly in her clear, high-pitched voice, and still oblivious of listening human dust and nothingness behind her desirous of Sunday dinners, "we are all *so* sorry. We did so *hope* for an acquittal. Such a sad, *sad* business."

"I don't know about sad," Millie replied. "It seems to me rather mad. But, after all, it's not the first time country justices have made themselves ridiculous, is it?"

She passed out with a small smile, Mr. Leveson, with whom she exchanged a "Good morning," making way for her and grinning to himself at the other lady's look of amazement and the suppressed rage of her husband, his colleague on the Bench yesterday, who was within earshot.

"She didn't turn a hair," Mr. Leveson afterwards told his wife, "and I could feel Morrison-Munn's swears inside my backbone. I wish we'd let the thing alone. One likes pluck, and she hasn't bad eyes."

"Aunt Carrie, I could have hugged that girl," said Maud Ascott, who had come up behind Millie at the gate, "that woman does so badly want snubbing."

"But, my dear, the poor woman meant to be kind," Mrs. Burroughes urged.

"Meant to be kind? Well, we know what sort of pavement 'meaning' makes," grumbled George. "No doubt she meant to patronize Miss

Ray, and, with the delicate tact of a Polar bear, and the native refinement of a Digger Indian, she'd best leave her betters alone. You thought I liked her? Of course I like her, but I shudder to think of the jumping upon she needs before she'll be fit for a better world than this."

"Dear George," Maud replied, "how pleasant it is to hear people reckon up the redeeming vices of their dearest friends! I can imagine you speaking of your poor cousin Maud as possessed of the savage courtesy of a Zulu, and the natural charm of a rattlesnake. Well, we may comfort ourselves with thinking that our dear friend will soon work out her own salvation if she steadily patronizes a Millie Ray or so a week. And I can't help thinking that our poor dear local Shallows made themselves anything but ridiculous yesterday."

"Oh! as for that, once in Court of course they were bound to commit for trial on the evidence," George admitted. "That is why," he needlessly explained, "I wanted the thing hushed up. They are mighty zealous in rebuking clerical crime and administering equal justice to grocers and clergymen. They can't see that, while Honeybun steps straight out of prison into his shop and goes on selling soap and candles, as if nothing had happened, poor dear old Ray is irretrievably ruined by the mere suspicion. Yet they must needs go out of their way to stab a dying man."

Miss Ray's class needed no correction that afternoon. Her boys were, like the whole school, petrified to see her in her place as usual, yet not quite as usual: there was something in her face that reduced those volatile youths to absolute good behaviour. They did not exchange so much as a kick the whole afternoon, were models of attention, and even answered when spoken to. But by that happy law of Nature which preserves the balance of things, the other scholars made up for this excessive virtue by concentrating all their attention upon Miss Ray and whispering about her, except when they stared at Bella and whispered, not only about but to that bewildered damsel.

Millie observed these small attentions with a sardonic smile. Also the curious looks and muttered comments of people she passed when she went abroad: cottagers peering from doors and windows, jesting remarks and coarse chuckles of men standing at corners and outside public-

houses, and inquisitive looks of the little Lusters, finally the ordeal of meeting the worthy pair themselves, and wincing under their well-meant but scarifying condolences—these things developed her latent acerbity to an extent that amazed her. Her little bitter smiles became so frequent that her blood seemed to have turned to verjuice, such acid observations rose to her lips as not all the honey in all the hives about Freshford could sweeten.

"What a sour old frump I shall be at fifty," she thought, "if I can be so nasty at nineteen. And I used to be such a meek little prig, made of sugar and spice and all that's nice!"

"When the mind is free the body's delicate:" large griefs swallow small ones; housewives are reckless of smashed china when the house is on fire; and Millie would have felt this ugly notoriety more keenly had she been less completely overwhelmed by trouble.

But she was careful not to expose her parents to similar annoyance, and acquiesced in her mother's seclusion in the small house. Only after dark she coaxed her father forth, taking him in the clear, pale, spring nights over the breezy downs or down by the sea, where the live salt air and sound of tumbling waves on the glimmering marge of sand and shingle was very sweet and healing. The household tasks so soon resumed by poor Mrs. Ray were sadly inadequate to fill her weary days of sorrow and double loneliness. She missed, not only her husband's converse, but her son and the incessant care and attendance he needed. She missed the parish affairs; she clung to her mending basket as to an anchor in storm. Afterwards she remembered that her chief solace in those dreary days had been derived from the sudden perception that Millie, delicate and over-tasked, needed keeping-up, to which end she constantly devised and prepared soups and cups of strengthening things—dreadful messes at which poor Millie's soul revolted—to surprise and refresh her on her return home.

The poor curate had no such solace; he could neither mend nor cook; his daily duty and all accustomed occupations were prohibited to him. But he still sat in his accustomed position, bastioned in a stronghold of ponderous theology, silent, with his commentated Bible open before him and writing materials to hand, for hours and hours.

Mrs. Ray came and went in the room, chiefly silent, the minute sound of her stitching exaggerated by the stillness which she often longed to break, vainly seeking suitable words in her vexed brain. She dared not look at him: it was part of the unwritten covenant that he should be unobserved in his fortress of silence in happier days; now such observation would be doubly intrusive. She heard neither scratch of pen nor rustle of leaves, and feared what his lonely thoughts might be.

They were indeed sad, though quite other than she feared. "He that sitteth in the heavens hath laughed them to scorn; the Most High hath had them in derision," was the bitter burden of them, it came in as the refrain of every stanza in the poem, however various these might be. He had sinned a presumptuous sin in asking a sign and wonder; he had been elated and spiritually uplifted by the signal favour granted to his faithless importunity: therefore he, who had supposed himself honoured in the sight of Heaven, was humbled to the dust and exposed to shame in the sight of man. He had sinned in his idolatrous and partial love for his only son: therefore he was justly chastised. All this he acknowledged and yet, deep down in his wounded heart, there was ever a bitter sense of injustice, that sometimes rose and found expression in such remonstrances with, and complaints to, high Heaven, as echo down the dim ages from many a Hebrew Psalm and from the immortal cry of suffering man, uttered in the Job poem—such reproaches as arise only from the deep heart of reverent faith, and yet which, taken alone, savour of doubt and almost impiety. Like Job, who said, "Thou art become cruel to me," he sometimes complained that his Maker had been unkind to him and had chastened him beyond his strength, unmindful of his frame and forgetting that he was but dust.

Sometimes when he sat thus, cabined and confined in his misery, his troubled eyes became aware of the sweetness of advancing spring, the singular lucidity of the blue sky shadowed by high-sailing clouds, the unfolding of young leafage in every variety of soft and sunny hue in trees and hedgerows visible from the window, the growing richness of wild birds' song, the flowers Millie gathered in lane and wood for him and that indescribable sense of movement and life throb-

bing in everything, which marks the season and is half a pleasure and half a pain, or wholly either, according to mood and temperament. Then his heart stirred and he was touched by a feeling like home-sickness, remembering better things, and almost wondering that sunshine should still be sweet and the earth fair, when all was so dark and desolate within him.

One day he sought to bring order into his thoughts by writing down some of those better feelings and purer hopes that rewarded his inward wrestling from time to time. But his pen had not travelled half-way across a page before it was snatched from his hand and tossed hither and thither by the kitten, who had lain crouched on the table, watching its movements with bright eyes and quivering body for some seconds. Thrice was the pen recovered, Muffie gently rebuked and deposited on the floor, the chain of thought taken up again and the writing resumed for a longer or shorter space, and thrice did the small spirit of mischief creep stealthily on and snatch the pen from the busy fingers and toss it over the paper with many a blot and blur. The third time Mr. Ray paused, baffled but still patient, and intent on pursuing the interrupted train of thought, when Muffie, now sadly at a loss for playmates—Walter and Buffie being away, and the others too sad to be amused by her gambols—joyously accepted the resignation of the pen into her paws as a free licence for sport, bit and worried the quill, made hay of the papers, overturned the ink by a sudden deft dab of the paw and careered madly round the table, overleaping the theological rampart and even fluttering the leaves of the Bible. Mr. Ray let the imp gambol on unrestrained, for the desolate thought arose in him that human destinies were ruled by powers as irresponsible, as blind, and as capricious as a kitten's sport. Of what use to supplicate, to reproach, to propitiate *fate*? One thing happened to the just and the unjust: he had cleansed his heart in vain and washed his hands in innocency.

The kitten frisked on till it was tired amid blotted and torn papers, fragments of sermons, notes and prayers, an image of irresponsible freakish fate. And some days later Mr. Ray found the inky print of a small paw on the margin of the Bible, near these words, "Though he slay me yet will I trust in Him."

(*To be continued.*)





## ① Mistress Mine.

Words by SHAKESPEARE.

Music by W. AUGUSTUS BARRATT.

VOICE. *Vivace.* *mp* 1. O mis-tress

PIANO. *f* *p*

mine, where are ye roam - ing? O stay and hear, your true love's

*colla voce.*

com - ing; That can sing both high and low..... Trip no fur - ther,

*f* *p*

pret - ty sweet - ing, Jour - neys end in lov - ers' meet - ing, Ev - 'ry

*cres.* *cres.*

wise man's son can tell.....

*8ve.* *loco.* *f*

What is love?..... 'tis not here - af - ter; Pre - sent mirth hath

*mp* *p* *colla voce.*

pre - sent laugh - ter ; What's to come is still un - - sure.....

*f*

*p* In de - lay there lies no plen - ty ;— Then come kiss me,

*cres. lusingando.*

*p* *cres.*

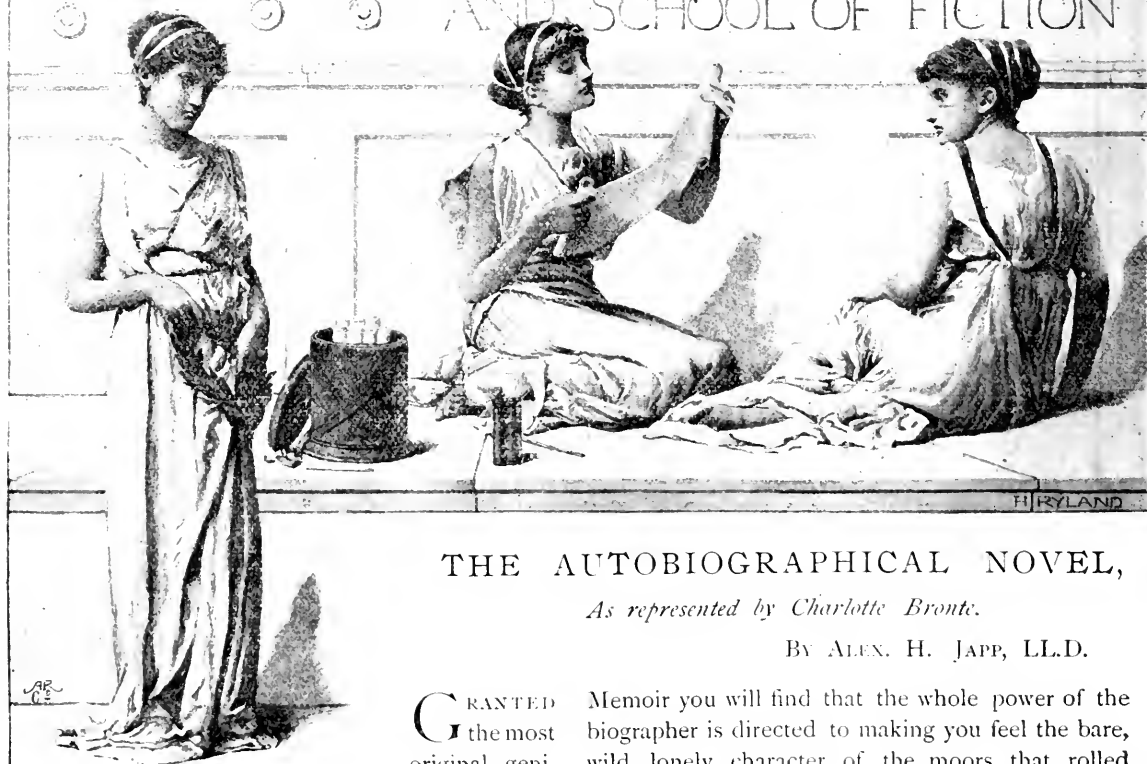
*f rall.* sweet and twen - ty, Youth's a stuff will not..... en - dure !.....

*f rall.* *f*

*loco.*

*ff*

# THE ATALANTA SCHOLARSHIP AND SCHOOL OF FICTION



## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOVEL,

*As represented by Charlotte Brontë.*

BY ALEX. H. JAPP, LL.D.

**G**RANTED the most original genius, yet much

at least, in the form and contour of the product, will trace itself to environment, that is, to the circumstances among which the writer lived. It can hardly be otherwise. Genius is not only inventive and creative—it is sensitive, impressible, receiving, mirror-like, the images of objects brought before it, but, unlike the mirror, retaining them. It is rather like the sensitised plate of the photographer—it fixes whatever is exposed to it: creation is rather the re-combining and re-presenting of these images, under an impulse of personal experience and of keen sympathy, than aught else. No writer, therefore, can escape from his past, nor from the influences and impressions of youth. A great critic, indeed, has said that no writer, however gifted, can write with full effect of any phase of life or character which he has not known in his youth. This may be somewhat extreme in the expression, but the principle it presents is profoundly true. In few writers has this been better exhibited than in Charlotte Brontë.

If you turn to the first portion of Mrs. Gaskell's

Memoir you will find that the whole power of the biographer is directed to making you feel the bare, wild, lonely character of the moors that rolled round Haworth: the desolateness, and sometimes the rugged grandeur and eeriness of the scenes beheld on all sides, in sunset, in storm, or in the early light of morning. And next, she aims at showing you the rugged, angular, independent, strongly-individual types of character formed amid those scenes—each one standing distant, self-sufficing and isolated, yet with possibilities of the most abounding sociality and even abandonment in reaction from this solitude, the dim sense of tragic possibilities of revenge, and half-savage physical outbreak, alongside of great reserve and stolidity—no kind of sentimental effusiveness, but the utmost self-restraint, and this not only with regard to facts but in respect even of possibilities, and the keenest insight into the motives and purposes and tendencies of others. Shrewdness almost preternatural, along with a dogged pertinacity of self-assertion, and keen intensity of passion, alongside of the most rugged indifference to the expression of it. Then, closer still to the life of the artist, the strange, abnormal character of the family and household. The father, a poet

in his own way, yet a cynic and solitary, taking his meals, for weeks and months, apart from the family, absorbed with his own thoughts, his own memories, it may be, in a certain way, with his own remorse : the brother, so highly gifted, yet a victim to indulgences of the most degrading kind, a worshipper of beauty, yet without ordinary moral stamina : the sisters, each carrying with her a burden of disease, and the premonition of an early death, yet fighting against any acknowledgment of it, in spite of physical weakness, by force of will, doing what they regarded as their allotted portion, feeling intensely and with profound passion, yet never presenting a ruffled surface—with all their refinement of thought and feeling capable of such wonderful efforts of will, and even physical courage, as that of Emily against the infuriated bull-dog which she mastered.

Here you have a family of the most original genius, predetermined, as one might say, to develop in a narrow, intense channel, generally true to the conditions of the narrowed, intense, self-sufficing and yet self-suppressing life which they had seen and lived. And that this was the case with the Brontës, more especially with Charlotte Brontë, their works are the best witness. The problems which haunted Charlotte Brontë were the problems that sprang immediately out of what was special in her circumstances, and the impressions they would naturally produce on sensitive minds. They are coloured directly and indirectly by the surroundings and the actual facts of her life. Her leading characters are portraits of herself, and of persons she had met, thrown into relief against a background of earlier impressions. And what she deals with, what inspires her, is the sense of some *immediate* experience, pain, or emotional crisis. It is this that renders the writings of all the Brontës, but especially those of Charlotte, so unique a mixture of the biographic and dramatic, with the keenest of the attractions that lie in both. You see a heart revealed in its subtlest workings, and with the intensity as of a personal revelation or confession, and all else is coloured by the consciousness of this. In the most tragic moments, nevertheless, we cannot wholly recall the mind from the author. We find ourselves mixing up Jane Eyre with Currer Bell (Charlotte Brontë), and cannot escape from a conviction that Jane acts precisely as Charlotte, in the

same circumstances, would have acted. The wide horizon which is opened up for us by the mightier masters of creation—Chaucer and Shakespeare—is narrowed for us by the Brontës, as though the telescope were inverted, and we see only for the moment the little quivering speck of human flesh on which the writer has gradually fixed our eye, and forces us to concentrate it there till we are held as by a kind of fascination, that would be perhaps morbid, but for the sincerity and high purpose of the writer. All our craving for any wider or more relaxing survey is for the time subdued. We are at once troubled and satisfied. Our sympathies are the more powerfully appealed to, that the process is conducted in a clear, precise, matter-of-fact manner. Despite the close quarters at which the Brontës seem to stand to human passion and painful experience, there is no sense of disturbance. They remain calm and clear, to perceive and to record, even while the emotions are strung to the highest pitch. Though the heart quivers, beats fast and high, the head is not only clear, but, as though quickened and made keener by the very strain put upon it, the hand is steady to pourtray, precisely as are the head and hand of a great surgeon, who may realise the tortures of his patient under the operation, but remains unmoved till the work be done. It has been said, with some show of truth, that they delighted to show raw flesh, and to make the reader share in their delight. If this is not wholly true, it is certainly true that hardly did they illustrate that aloofness and superiority which Goethe said was necessary to art. "Before the artist could paint experience," said Goethe, "he must have lived above it : become superior to all the distracting and perplexing trouble of it." "Emotion recollected in tranquillity," is not what distinguishes them. It is rather emotion reflected in the course of its own stormy current.

Hence two results : (1) That no object or impression of a secondary character can be allowed any verge on its own account. All painting of nature or landscape, all detail and description whatever, is subordinated and kept strictly in harmony with the emotional current. Nothing of external picture appears for its own sake apart from or uncoloured by the central impression. Hence, along with the intensity of perception and a part of it, a sense of the most thorough-going

economy, reserve, and care. Noticeably is this the case in the sights recorded by Jane Eyre in her flight from Rochester's house, and in the impressions she gives of the aspects of nature when she returns there after the fire: and the same has to be said of the most tragic passages in "The Professor." (2) The sense of self-suppression, superiority to the most immediate calls or claims of feeling or passion, so essentially a part of the characters of these sensitive, refined women, brought up amidst life so elemental and even primitive, is faithfully reflected in the novels of Charlotte Brontë. Look at the central crisis of "Jane Eyre." Who but Charlotte Brontë could have painted that passion, so exacting, so overmastering, as to make her heroine tremble and stagger on the verge, and yet gather herself together and retreat, going away on that self-sacrificing quest for work as a teacher, to return again, by such gentle and wholly natural steps, to Rochester, who is now blind and stricken? All the interests of human imagination are excited, and yet the strictest demands even of conventional morality in the end are appealed to, if not satisfied.

The necessity for immediate experience as an initial impulse is confessed. Charlotte Brontë said that she must wait for an inspiring call before she could write: hence a kind of inevitableness as though it had to be. Charlotte's genius resembled somewhat those creatures that hibernate—it demanded long periods of rest, suddenly to rise again, and anew to work and wrestle. She could have done no good under Mr. Anthony Trollope's prescription: to go to your desk every morning and write so much, whether you felt inclined or not. That was suitable enough to the chronicle style of fiction, not to this magic mixture of intimate heart-autobiography and dramatic presentment. For this reason it was, perhaps, that she so wished to guard Mr. W. S. Williams against exaggerated anticipation. "You must calculate low when you calculate on me." The sense of limit was more consciously realised and present with her than the sense of power of productiveness (which in the creative artist is usually the most emphasised): self-restraint, economy again, in the most unexpected phase. There was little or no craving for expression or confession in themselves: hence in the women a sense of self-restraint, even of coldness, though the artistic

work was keen, insistent, in a sense, burning. But the sense of unity of expression and impulse derived from the work is so commanding that you feel nothing Charlotte Brontë could have added to the amount of her work, could have substantially increased her fame. Though she passed through a long and trying probation there is no sign of it in her works. From the first it seems as though complete command of the instrument had been attained, though full of half-instinctive realisation of the limits to be observed. It would seem indeed as though her genius was complete and perfect within its own sphere, from the moment it sought earnestly and fully to express itself.

One lesson to be learned from the art of the Brontës, therefore, is that knowledge of life or of society, in the conventional sense, is not an essential in the production of strong, vital, initiative works of fiction. It is essential for the half-kindly, half-cynical, social sketching with which Thackeray began his career. But their art was at the other pole from this. Its motto might have been, "Look into your heart and write." How very characteristic of Charlotte Brontë is her view of Jane Austen, in that letter which she wrote to Mr. Smith Williams. In it she says:—"The passions are perfectly unknown to her—she rejects even a speaking acquaintance with that stormy sisterhood; even to the feelings she vouchsafes no more than an occasional graceful but distinct recognition: too frequent converse with them would ruffle the smooth elegance of her progress. Her business is not half so much with the human heart as with the human eyes, mouth, hands, and feet. What sees keenly, speaks aptly, moves flexibly, it suits her to study: but what throbs fast and full, though hidden, what the blood rushes through, what is the unseen seat of life, and the sentient target of Death—*this* Miss Austen ignores. She no more, with her mind's eye, beholds the heart of her race, than each man, with bodily vision, sees his heart in his heaving breast."

The passions—the stormy sisterhood—were the genii that inspired and supported Charlotte Brontë. And she found all the possibilities within herself: the tense, lyrical note (which is, after all, the most attractive in prose fiction, as in poetry) was thus found. Her works furnish a warning, and a strong warning, against the excess of nature descriptions

and of detail in which too many beginners in fiction are apt to indulge, forgetful that, to the artist in every department, nature, as such, really exists only as symbol, helpful to emphasise and to illustrate, but no more. If, then, you have cumbered your narrative with long descriptions of nature, with reflections, with over-elaborate details of any kind, carefully enquire how far they (1) either illustrate or add direct effect to your situation; (2) how far they aid or interfere with the action; and (3) how far they throw light or otherwise on your characters or (4) aid the maintenance at once of true variety and true unity.

Charlotte Brontë's case shows, and shows decidedly, that what is most enthralling for the reader is that which is most keenly felt by the writer, presuming the writer's power of presentment and portraiture; that for permanence and grip, sincere and direct insight into the heart and motives is, in the last result, of more conse-

quence than knowledge of conventional detail, style, or anything of that kind. The quick, penetrating effect, the fascination, in a word, that resides in her work is due to her constant reference to personal experience, and to her determination to be perfectly sincere. Thus, though it would not be safe to advise any kind of direct imitation of her, either in thought, style, or method, a great lesson is conveyed by every passage she has written. It is this: first find your subject—some point of human experience, motive, or passion—and then, having found it, allow no secondary influence to disturb or to weaken your hold upon it. It matters not how exceptional the phase may be, so it is truly perceived and realised, and presented, with directness, simplicity, and sincerity, then you may be sure of a response from others. Here, as elsewhere, the words of the poet Burns are true:—

“The heart's aye, the part aye,  
To keep us right or wrong.”

## ON SOME INFLUENCES OF GIRLHOOD.

BY LAURA ALEX. SMITH.

AT the Central Conference of Women-workers, which was recently held in Leeds, one afternoon was devoted to the interests of girls in particular. The Albert Hall, where the conference was held, was filled with an audience composed in great part of young girls who showed, by their eager faces and frequent outbursts of applause, how much they appreciated the papers which formed the themes of the discussions.

The tendency of the day is to advance perhaps a little too quickly: it is an age of progression for women of all ages, and, where our elders have led, the younger generation has followed. “Forward, but not too fast,” would be a safe motto for us all. An occasional pause, sufficiently lengthy to permit of indulging in retrospect, a lull in the routine of work or the round of pleasure, are not only desirable, but necessary in our busy nineteenth century lives—and they are almost certain to be productive of some good. Girls who lead quiet uneventful existences in the country may think that such intervals of rest are very unnecessary for them, because their lot is cast in a peaceful or perhaps sleepy neighbourhood; but these same girls are kept very much in touch with the world at large through the medium of books and papers: hence

the same necessity for a pause in the literary life which each may map out for herself, and hence the reason of Miss Esmé Stuart's address on the “Discipline of Reading.”

Unless the child, the girl, or the woman, can discipline her reading, she is liable to enter into a dark inheritance of soundless but winged words, tipped with poison, which may bring about her mental ruin. Once the mind becomes so poisoned no dependence can be placed on action. She had known girls, Miss Stuart said, who, after closing or banging down the book, were quite incapable of telling what it was about, the names of its characters, or even the outline of its story. Such a girl had not only done herself no good, but she had done herself positive harm. She had lowered her nature and her mind, and lost her reverence for words—which reverence is a science as well as a priceless virtue. If the girl who had just left school had already disciplined herself within the scope which was hers, she now found new kingdoms to conquer, but the conquest was easier. On the other hand, if she had not done so, her freedom was no blessing, but a curse: her principle was the principle of *laissez-faire*. All solid reading is distasteful to such a nature. She will

devour novels at all seasons, in all places, and if she is a quick reader, the novels she gets through are legion. But the girl who has disciplined her reading would portion it out wisely and well, and would know that there is a higher duty than self-culture, namely, that of disseminating, as it were, our own culture. She will study politics (even with no liking for them) in order to please her father or her brothers, and she will read such books as her mother or her aunts will like to discuss with her, or such as would create a bond of fellowship between them. She will be careful to sift the flowers out of the mass of literary weeds, she will carefully choose her books, perhaps on the recommendation of sympathetic friends, and she will, beyond all things, avoid trashy and immoral books, and remember that great thoughts could not possibly be produced in large quantities, even by great writers. It may be thought by some that discipline is only necessary for deep books or serious studies, but this is not the case. A good novel, read in the proper manner, will do as much good, nay, sometimes much more, than a great history, or than most of the biographies of our day, which often reveal but one side of a character.

In every thing we read, whether it be on current topics, on some engrossing question of daily import, a volume of history, a great man's biography, or a novel, let us read it thoroughly, paying the work the compliment at least of attention. An old writer, speaking of books, said: "We should make the same use of a book that a bee does of a flower: she steals sweets from it, but does not injure it." As for the choice of them, well, a very wise man has said of this: "There is a kind of physiognomy in the titles of books no less than in the faces of men, by which a skilful observer will as well know what to expect from the one as the other."

Never read anything for the avowed purpose of killing time, it is an insult to the writer, and an admission of incapacity in oneself. Neither read without reflecting: it is like eating without digesting. Was it not Pliny of whom it was said that he picked something out of everything he read? With Lady Mary Montague I would impress upon you that "No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting."

The Hon. Mrs. A. T. Lyttleton's paper was on "The Influence on the Home of the Advance in

the Education of Women." This proved specially interesting to the audience, for many of them were High School girls, and others were students at college; all of whom are of course undergoing a more or less advanced education.

Mrs. Lyttleton spoke some time on the great changes which had come about in recent years in women's position, and of the grave necessity of considering what women should do in the future. Whilst she admitted that in many ways these changes and reforms were most desirable, yet it must be remembered that the bond of family life might be loosened through it. To properly increase women's freedom, it must be reconciled with the home life. Sooner or later the problem of life must present itself to every woman, and it is by the women of the rising generation that it must be solved. Some people tell us that young women will fail to solve it, that they are too much wanting in the qualities of judgment and discretion, but if this were true, surely education such as girls are receiving in our days, and the wider knowledge of life which it gives us, would help to strengthen those qualities, so that the difficulties of the future would in a great degree bring with them their own solution. The family must remain the great centre and moulder of character, and family life, with all its hallowed associations, must remain untouched. If women would keep in mind these two ideals, and strive earnestly to reconcile them, they would in the end not find them incompatible. Too many of the so-called highly educated and cultured girls find home-life dull. Education should fit a woman for her environment, otherwise it is valueless as a producer of happiness. There seems to be more inclination amongst young women to go district visiting than to stop at home and undertake humble duties there; but the latter is by far the most important. A girl's first duty is to her parents, and this duty is the more imperative when the daughter is an only one. By all means let our girls enlarge their sphere of action, if by so doing they are not entrenching upon their family duties, but let them ever place these first. It is the most sacred part of a young English woman's career, this apprenticeship to domestic virtues; and no amount of success in the world can make up for the neglect of it. There are so many vocations open to women now-a-days, that the temptation to forsake home duties becomes ever greater.



# Atalanta Scholarship Competition, 1892-1893.

## EXAMINER'S REPORT.

The stories sent in by those whose names figure in the list following display more than an average degree of literary merit. In regard to *style*, there has been a curious uniformity of excellence: the falling-off has been mainly shown in plot and character-drawing. The task of the examiner has been rendered easier by the fact that few combined all of these qualities—a tale written with the ease and polish of a master-hand having utterly lacked originality or having been lifeless in characterisation. On the whole, the Competition has shown convincing proof that there should be no lack of literary talent in the coming generation.

## AWARDS.

The Scholarship of £20 for two years will be awarded to—

EMILY BLANCHE DUNN, Kelfield Lodge, York.

The Prize of £10 will be divided equally between—

RACHEL LIVETE MACNAMARA, 66, South Mall, Cork, Ireland; and

WINIFRED PERCY SMITH, Berton Hatch, Near Woking, Surrey.

Proxime Accesserunt—

KATHERINE BURR, KATHERINE DOUGLAS KING, HELEN OUSTON.

### CLASS I.

#### DIVISION I.

Marie B. Lamb.	Ethel R. Faraday.	Nora Hopper.	Gwendolin Leach.
May Shelton.	Esther Poland.	F. E. Lyall.	Margaret Hart-Davis.
Beatrice M. Danby.	Annie Foster.	Florence M. Coolan.	Esther D. Gibson.
Constance Colly.	Mary Palin.	Olive C. Parr.	Sybil Johnstone-Douglas.
Irene C. Calliphonas.	Marion B. Andrews.		

#### DIVISION II.

Alice A. Baird.	Monica M. Gardner.	E. P. Howe.	Mabel E. Skae.
Violet G. Parsons.	Jessie H. Hayllar.	Ada M. Galton.	Lilias H. Ranken.
Christie Dutton.	Gertrude E. Howard.	Marjory MacMurchy.	Isabel S. Ashby.
Caroline G. Rees.	Mary Knipe.	Antoinette B. Danford.	Alice M. Wilton.
H. Rosa Sims.	Frances D. Little.	Ida Swanwick.	Florence Foulger.
Adelelaide M. Willson.	Rosie Alderson.	Winifrede M. Hobson.	Mary H. Wren.

#### DIVISION III.

Henriette Hutchison.	Helen M. Price.	A. M. Bolden.	Beatrice M. Kidd.
Mabel Leeds.	Kathleen Falleen.	Denis de Vitre.	Ethel M. Hathway.
Esther Grierson.	C. S. Cameron.	Florence S. Jackson.	C. Lawrence.
V. Maturin.	Nina Cresswell.	Kathleen L. Burke.	A. M. Barham.
A. T. Needham.	Mary S. Mosey.		

### CLASS II.

#### DIVISION I.

Beatrice Howell.	M. C. Arnold.	Alice M. Hewitt.	A. L. Whall.
Ada F. Dyer.	M. L. Howe.	Margaret E. Cornford.	K. L. Mann.
Agnes L. Nield.	A. M. Rogers.	Mabel S. Madden.	H. A. Down.
M. C. Ridsdel.	E. W. Disney.	Margaret M. Hewitt.	F. M. Cammell.
F. A. Leeper.	Jessica Thompson.		

#### DIVISION II.

Dora Knowles.	B. H. A. Jones.	E. A. Wynne.	Violet Burke.
A. M. Hillier.	May Russell.	Dora M. Davey.	E. G. Ronalds.
F. M. West.	L. E. Ison.	E. M. Warre.	Harriet Jaffé.
K. M. Waynam.	S. Frances Adams.	Marian O. Wilson.	F. Lawford.
M. M. Shephard.	Ida Lyon.	E. G. Edwards.	Ada F. Hughes.
B. L. Rice.	L. H. Montague.	C. M. Edge.	Dorothy Burke.
M. B. Elphinstone.	Ina Brodigan.	Ella Skey.	A. E. Redpath.
Ellen A. Hatch.	Theresa Reynolds.	W. F. Wynne.	

## DIVISION III.

E. Tyler.  
S. G. Edmonds.  
M. H. Welsh.  
H. J. de la Pryne.  
Mabel Hastings.  
Winifred Blackley.

M. O. Johnson.  
H. M. Pike.  
K. Jones Parry.  
Elsie Rhodes.  
M. J. Bolland.  
M. S. Elliott.

Grace Wylde.  
Isabel Peachey.  
E. L. Wills.  
L. F. Evans.  
M. G. Airey.  
G. M. Flood.

E. M. Longfield.  
K. E. Steward Taylor.  
E. R. Tapsell.  
M. Moor Lane.  
A. L. C. Hele.  
M. C. Auld.

## ATALANTA SCHOLARSHIP AND READING UNION.

Describe an incident introducing your ideals in man and woman, and their opposites in both sexes, so that the individual qualities of the four characters shall be apparent.

Reply papers must not exceed 500 words in length, and must be sent in on or before the 25th of February.

## ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (JANUARY).

## I.

Minerva (*The Curse of Minerva*). Lord Byron.

## II.

1. *Timon of Athens*. 2. Shakespeare. Act iv. sc. 3.

## III.

The Lady of the Lake. Canto ii.

## IV.

1. That when English money should become round the Prince of Wales would be crowned in London.

2. When about 1280 a new copper coinage was instituted simultaneously with the fall of the last Welsh Princes (see Green's *Smaller History*, p. 167).

## V.

1. Thomson.  
2. "O Jemmy Thomson! Jemmy Thomson, O!"

## VI.

1. Oliver Goldsmith. 2. David Garrick.

## VII.

*The Prelude and The Day is Done*. By Longfellow.

## SEARCH QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

## I.

1. To what creature are the following lines addressed?—  
"Only in sleep shall I behold that dark eye, glancing  
bright,  
Only in sleep shall hear again that step so firm and  
light."

2. Give poem and author.

## II.

1. What object is described as—

"Frail, but a work divine,  
Made so fairly well  
With delicate spire and whorl,  
How exquisitely minute,  
A miracle of design!"

2. Give name of poem.

## III.

Where occur the following expressions?—"Gadding vine," "wisard stream," "vocal reeds," "felon winds," "glowing violet."

## IV.

Give source from which is quoted these lines—

"Say, have ye marked what winged moments fall  
Between the distant cannon's flash and roar?"

## V.

Explain the following, and give name of poem—

"———Age, with sapient nod  
Marking the spot, still tarries to declare  
How they once lived, wherefore they are there."

## VI.

Of whom is this description given, and by whom?—"The huge, brawny Figure: through whose black brows and rude flattened face, there looks a waste energy as of Hercules not yet furibund."

## VII.

1. What region is described thus?—

"Dim vales—and shadowy floods—  
And cloudy-looking woods,  
Whose forms we can't discover  
For the tears that drip all over  
Huge moons there wax and wane."

2. Name the writer.

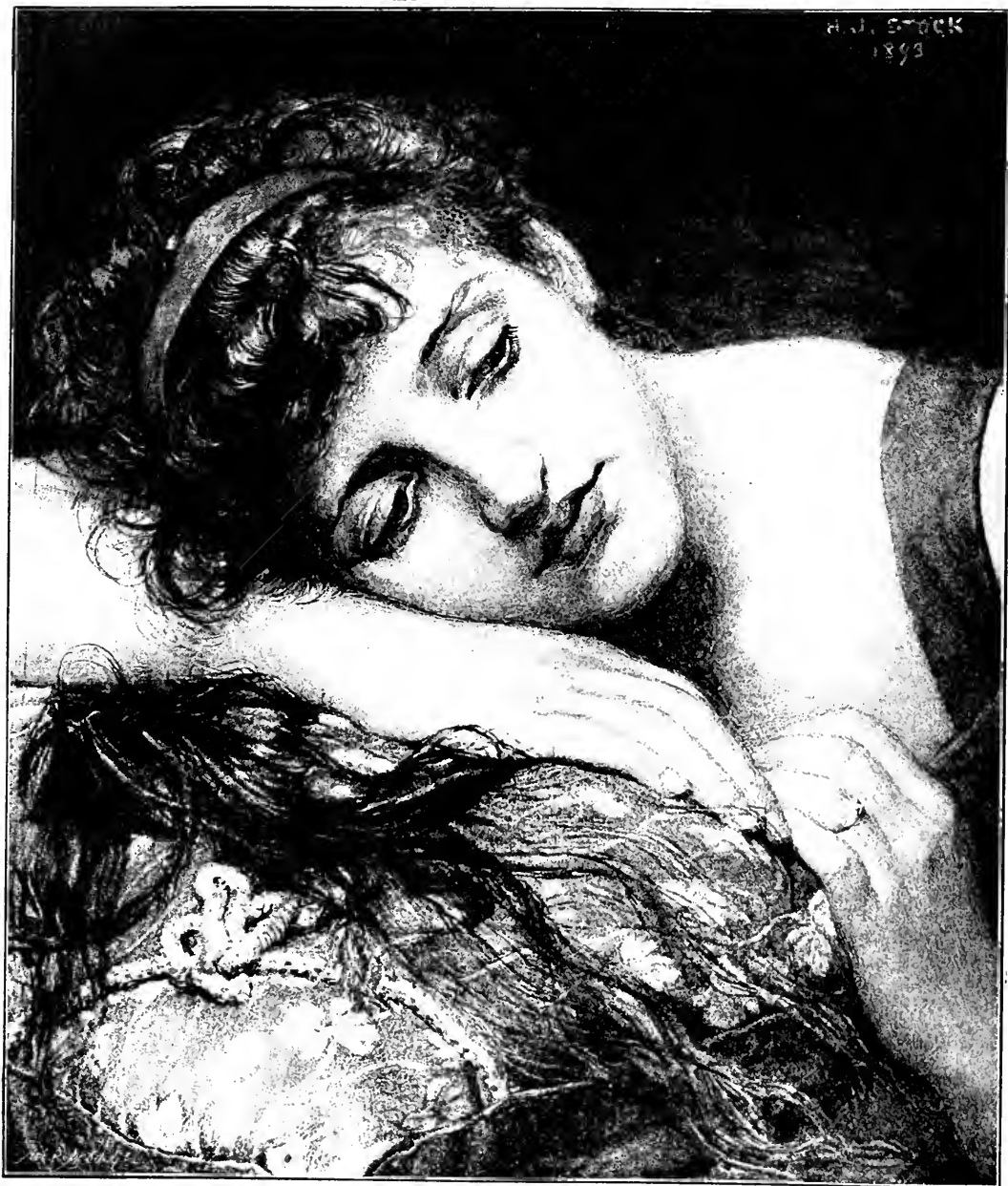
## VIII.

Whence are taken the following quotations?—

"This tiresome night, O Sleep! thou art to me  
A fly, that up and down himself doth shove  
Upon a fretful rivulet, now above,  
Now on the water vexed with mockery."

"———Shall I alone,  
I surely not a man ungently made,  
Call thee worst tyrant by which flesh is crost?"





REVERIE.

*Henry J. Stock, R.A.*

*(By permission of the Berlin Photographic Co.)*



## An Orchard Parable.

BY CHRISTIAN BOURKE.

**A** GNARLED and stunted apple-tree  
Whereon nor fruit nor flower was found—  
“Oh, cut it down,” she said to me,  
“It cumbereth the ground ;  
The other trees are brave and gay,  
See how their scented blossoms swing,  
*This* only witnesseth decay—  
Not good for anything.”

“Well, let it stand another year,  
’Twas grafted from a goodly tree,  
There may be life yet lingering here,”  
I said, “we’ll wait and see.”  
Another year had passed and gone—  
Ah me ! how swift some years depart !  
I trod the orchard all alone  
With a sore troubled heart :

For she upon her dying bed  
Had asked for that which scarce could be :  
“’Tis a sick fancy, love,” she said,  
“But you will humour me :  
Now surely Spring is at its prime,  
I know the flower-scent on the breeze :  
Do you remember, love, that time,  
Beneath the apple-trees ?

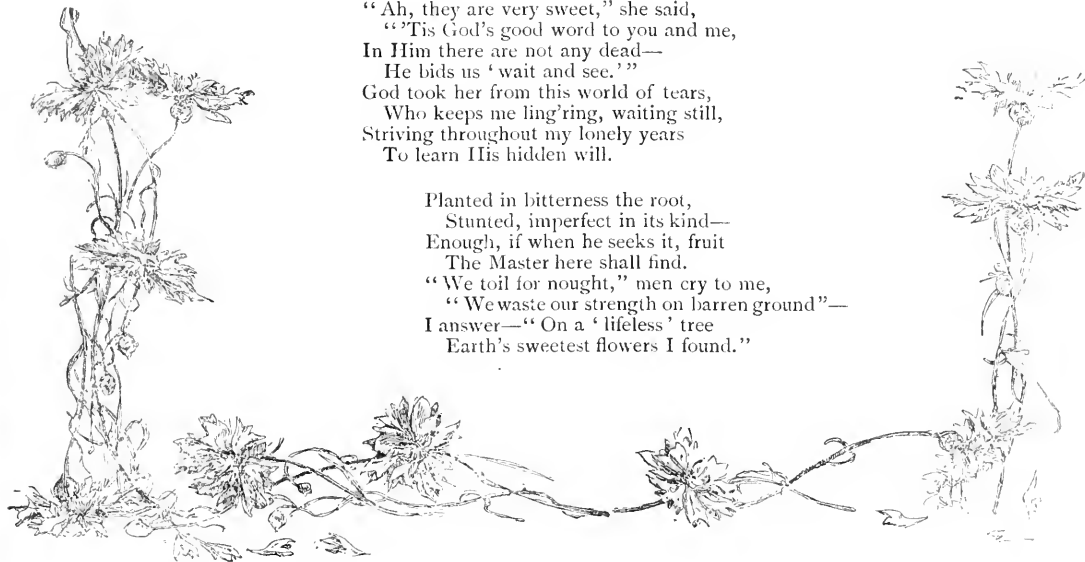
“Our sweetest hour of life had come,  
We plighted troth there, you and I—  
Bring me a branch of apple-bloom  
To look on ere I die.”  
Ah me ! my love, my six-months’ wife,  
That you should ask of me for nought !  
I would have given my very life  
To find the thing you sought ;

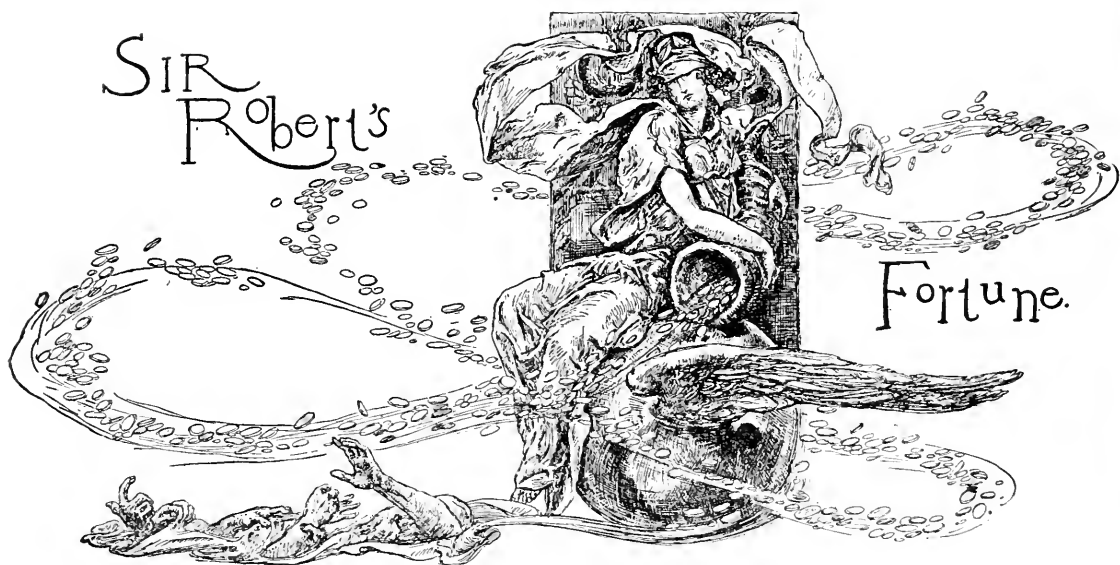
But through the orchard to and fro  
I searched with feverish, eager care :  
The fruit might soon make goodly show,  
But no sweet flowers were there !  
The time of bloom was well-nigh o’er.  
No stray late blossoms could I see,  
Till suddenly I stood before  
My stunted apple tree.

No more a cumberer of the ground,  
At last it had put forth its powers,  
Upon its top-most branch I found  
A royal spray of flowers !  
Oh, dearest tree in all the land !  
Oh, flowers more fair than all beside !  
I placed the blossoms in her hand  
An hour before she died !

“Ah, they are very sweet,” she said,  
“’Tis God’s good word to you and me,  
In Him there are not any dead—  
He bids us ‘wait and see.’”  
God took her from this world of tears,  
Who keeps me ling’ring, waiting still,  
Striving throughout my lonely years  
To learn His hidden will.

Planted in bitterness the root,  
Stunted, imperfect in its kind—  
Enough, if when he seeks it, fruit  
The Master here shall find.  
“We toil for nought,” men cry to me,  
“We waste our strength on barren ground”—  
I answer—“On a ‘lifeless’ tree  
Earth’s sweetest flowers I found.”





BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

PART I.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE snowstorm lasted for about a week, day after day, with an occasional interval, with winds that drifted it, and dreadful nights of frost that made it shrink, but covered it over with sparkling crystals: and with occasional movements of a more genial temperature, that touched the surface only to make it freeze again more fiercely when that relenting was over. The whole landscape was turned to whiteness, and the moor, with all its irregular lines, rounded as if a heavy white blanket had been laid over the hummocks of the ling and the hollows and deep cuttings. The hills were white, too, but showing great seams and crevices of darkness, from which all the magical colour had been taken by the absence of light. Black and white was what everything was reduced to, like the winter Alps, with a grey sky overhead still heavy with inexhaustible snow. This snowstorm was "a special providence" to the inhabitants of Dalrugas: at least, to most of them. Dougal grumbled, and suggested various ways in which it might be possible for the lad from Edinburgh to get away. He might walk two miles north, to a village on the main road, where the

coach was bound to pass every lawful day, whether it snowed or whether it blew: or he might get the geeg from the inn at Kinloch-Rugas to carry him south, and strike the route of another coach also bound to travel on every lawful day. But Dougal talked to the air, and nobody gave him heed: not to say that the gentleman from Edinburgh found means to conciliate him by degrees, and that, at last, a crack with Mr. Lumsden became a great relief to Dougal from the unmitigated chatter of the womankind by which he was surrounded night and day.

This week of snow flew as if on wings. They were shut off from all intrusion, and even from every invading question, by the impossibility of overstepping that barrier which nature had placed around them: they lived as in a dream, which circumstances had thus made possible without any strain of nature. Nobody could turn a stranger out into the snow, not Sir Robert himself. Had he been there, however little he liked his visitor, he would have been compelled to keep him in his house, and treat him like a favoured guest. Not even an enemy's dog could have been turned out into the snow. It made everything legitimate: everything simple and natural. I don't know that

Lily required this thought to support her, for, indeed, she was not at that time aware that any secret was made of the marriage, that it was concealed from anyone in the house—even Dougal; or that Helen Blythe, at the Manse, for instance, had not been made aware of it by that time. She had never clearly entered into the question why Helen Blythe had not been present: why the ceremony had been performed in the darkening, and so much mystery had surrounded it: except by the natural reason that no observation which could be avoided should be drawn upon the bride, and that, indeed, all possibility of vulgar remark should be guarded against. The question, What was to be done next? had filled Lily's mind on that day: but the snow had silenced it and covered it over like the ling bushes and the burn, which no longer made its usual trill of running remark, but was also hushed and bound by the new conditions which modified all the life of this portion of the earth. The moor and all its surroundings hung between heaven and earth in a great silence during this period. The grey sky hung low, so that it seemed as if an unwary wayfarer, if he went far enough against that heavy horizon, might strike against it, blinded as he must have been by the whirling flakes that danced and fluttered down, sometimes quickening in pace like the variations of a swift strathspey, sometimes falling large and deliberate like those dilated flakes of fire that fell on the burning sands in the Inferno. There were no images, however different in sentiment, that might not have been applied to that constant falling. It was snow—always snow—and yet there was in it all the varieties of poetry, when you looked at it, so to speak, from within, looking through it upon an empty world in which no other life or variety seemed to be left.

Sometimes, however, the pair sallied forth, notwithstanding the snow, to breathe the crisp and frosty air, and to feel with delight the great atmosphere and out-door world around them, instead of four walls. Lily wore a great camelot cloak, rough, but a protection against both wet and chill, with a large silver clasp under her chin, and her head and shoulders warmly hooded and wrapped in her plaid of the Ramsay colour, which she wore as fair Ramsays did in Allan Ramsay's verse. Lily's eyes sparkled under the tartan screen, and not to risk the chilling of a hand which it would have

been necessary to put forth to clasp his arm, Ronald in his big coat walked with his arm round her, to steady her on the snow: for every path was obliterated and they never knew when they might not stumble over a stifled burn, or among the heathery hillocks of the moor. These walks were not long, but they were delightful in the stillness and loneliness, the white flakes clothing them all over in another coat, lighting upon Lily's hair and Ronald's beard, getting into their eyes, half blinding them with the sudden moisture, and the laughter that followed. I will not attempt to give any account of the talk with which they beguiled both these devious rambles and the long companionship indoors in the warm room from which they looked out with so much comfort on the white and solitary world. It harmonized and made everything legitimate—that lucky snow. One could not ask, "What shall we do to-morrow?" in the sight of the absolute impossibility of doing anything. It was not the bridegroom, but Nature herself who had arranged this honeymoon. If it would but last! but then it was in the nature of things that it could not last.

The frost began to break up a little on the eighth day—or rather it was not the frost that broke up, but the sky that cleared. In the evening instead of the heavy grey there came a break which the sky looked through, and in it a star or two, which somehow changed altogether the aspect of affairs. That evening, as she stood looking out at the break so welcome to everybody—but which she was not so sure of welcoming as other people were—Lily felt the question again stir, like a bird in its nest, in the hushed happiness of her heart. In the morning, when she looked out upon a world that had again become light, with blue overhead, and a faint promise of sun, and no snow falling, it came back more strongly, this time like a secret ache. The women and Dougal and Sandy and even the ponies were full of delight in the end of the storm. "What a bonnie morning!" they shouted to each other, waking Lily from her sleep. A bonnie morning! There was colour again on the hills and colour in the sky. The distance was no longer shut out, as by a door, by the heavy firmament: it was remote, it was full of air, it led away into the world—into worlds unseen. As Lily gazed a golden ray came

out of it and struck along the snow in a fine line. Oh, it was bonnie! as they called to each other in the yard, as Rory snorted in his stable and all the chickens cackled, gathering about Katrin's feet. The snow was over! The storm was over! In a little while the whiteness would disappear and the moor would be green again. "What are we going to do?" All nature seemed to ask the question.

"I wish," said Ronald, "those fowls would cease their rejoicings about the end of the snow. I wish the snow could have lasted another fortnight, Lily: though perhaps I should not say that, for I could not have taken advantage of it. I should need to have invented some means of getting away."

"Because you were tired of it, Ronald?" she said with a smile: but the smile was not so bright as it had been. It was not Lily's snow-smile: all light and radiance—it was one into which the question had come, a little wistful, a little anxious. Ronald saw, and his heart grieved at the change.

"That's the likely reason," he said, with a laugh, "but oh, Lily, my bonnie love, here is the Parliament House all astir again, the judges sitting, and all the work begun."

"Well," she said, that smile of hers shooting out a pure beam of fire upon him, "I am ready, Ronald, I am ready, too."

"Ready to speed the parting husband, and to wish me good luck?" he said, with a faint quiver in his voice. He was not a coward by nature, but Ronald this time was afraid. He had not forgotten the question, "What are we going to do?" which had been expressed in every line of Lily's face, in every tone of her voice, before the evening of the marriage. He knew it had come again, but he did not know how he was to meet it. He plunged into the inevitable conflict with his heart in his mouth.

"To speed the parting——Are you going, Ronald, are you thinking of going—without me?"

"My dearest," he said, spreading out his hands in deprecation, "it's like rending me asunder; it is like tearing my heart out of my bosom."

"I am not asking you what it is like," cried Lily. "What I am asking is your meaning. Were you thinking of going without me?"

"Lily, Lily!" he said, "don't be so dreadfully hard upon me! What am I to do? I know nothing else that I can do."

"Oh, if it's only that!" she said, "I can tell you, and very easy, what to do. You will just take me down to Kinloch-Rugas, or to that other place where the coach stops, and wrap me well in my camlet cloak and in my tartan plaid—and I'll not feel the cold, not so much as you will, for women's blood is warm—and when we get to Edinburgh we will take the topmost story of a house, and make it as warm as a nest, and get the first sunshine and the bonnie view away to Fife and the north. And Beenie will follow us with my things and her own; but we'll just be all alone for the first day or two, and I will make you your dinner with my own hands," said Lily, holding up those useful implements with a look of triumph, which was, alas! too bright, which was like the sun when a storm is coming: brilliant with alarm and a sense of something very different to come.

"They don't look very fit for it, those bits of white hands," he said, eager, if possible, by any means, to divert her from the more important question, and he took her hands in his and kissed them: but Lily was not to be diverted in this way.

"You may think what you like of how they look—but they are just a very useful pair of hands, and can cook you a Scots collop, or a chicken, or fish in sauce, as well as any person. I know what I have undertaken, and if you think I will break down, you are mistaken, Ronald Lumsden, in me."

"I am not mistaken in you, Lily. I know there is nothing you could not do if you were to try: but am I to be the one to make a drudge of my Lily? I that would like her to eat of the fat and drink of the sweet, as the ministers say, and have no trouble all her days?"

"It depends upon what you call trouble," said Lily, still holding up her flag. "Trouble I suppose we shall have, sooner or later, or we'll be more than mortal: but to serve you your dinner is what I would like to do. You'll go out to the Parliament House and work to get the siller—for it must be allowed that between us we have not much of the siller, and you cannot buy either collops or chuckies without it, nor scarcely even a haddie or a herring out of the sea. But that's the man's share. And then I will buy it, and clean it, and put it on in the pot, and you will eat of your wife's cooking and your heart will be glad.



Do you think I want to go back to Moray Place, or a fine house in one of the new Crescents, and sit with my hands before me? Not me, not me!"

"My bonnie Lily," he cried, "it's a bonnie dream, and like yourself: and if you only cooked a crust it would be better than all the grand French kickshaws in the world, or the English puddings, to me."

"You need not be so humble, sir," said Lily, "I will cook no crust. It will be savoury meat, such as thy soul loveth: though I'll not cheat you as that designing woman, Rebekah, did."

"My bonnie Lily, you'll always do more for me, and better for me, than I deserve," he cried. "Is that the postman, for the first time, coming up the road from the town?"

They went to the window to look out at this remarkable phenomenon, and there he kept her, pointing out already the break of the snow upon the side of the moor, revealing the little current of the burn, and something of the edge of the road, along which—wonderful sight!—that solitary figure was making its way. "But it will not be passable, I think, till to-morrow, for any wheeled thing, so we will make ourselves happy for another day," Ronald said: and this was all the answer he gave her. He was very full of caresses, of fond speeches, and lover's talk all day. He scarcely left an opening for anything more serious. If Lily began again with her question he always found some way of stopping her mouth. Perhaps she was not unwilling, in a natural shrinking from conflict, to have her mouth stopped. But there rose between them an uneasy sense of something to be explained, something to be unravelled: a desire on one side which was to encounter on the other resistance not to be overcome.

Ronald went out to Dougal after dinner and stood by him while he suppered the pony. "I think the roads will be clear to-morrow, Dougal," he said.

"I wouldna wonder," said Dougal. His opinion was that the lad from Edinburgh would just sorn on there for ever, eating Sir Robert's good meat, and would never more go away.

"Which do you think would be best? to lend me Rory and the little cart to take me in to Kinloch-Rugas, or to send for the geeg from the inn to catch the coach on the South Road at Inverlochers?"

"I could scarcely gie an opinion," said Dougal. "A stoot gentleman o' your age might maybe just as easy walk."

When Dougal said "a stoot gentleman" he did not mean to imply that Ronald was corpulent, but that he was a strong fellow and wanted no pony to take him four miles.

"That's true enough," said Ronald, "but there's my portmanteau, which is rather heavy to carry."

"As grand as you"—Dougal began, but then he stopped and reflected that he was, so to speak, on his own doorstep (in the absence of Sir Robert) and that it was a betrayal of all the traditions of hospitality to be rude to a guest—especially to one who was about to take himself away. "Weel," he added quickly, with a push to his bonnet, "I canna spare you Rory, the young leddy might be wanting a ride; but Sandy and the black powny will take in the bit box, if ye're sure that you've made up your mind—at last."

"I daresay you thought I was never going to do that," Ronald said, with a laugh.

And then Dougal melted too. "Oh," he said, "I just thought you knew when you were in good quarters," in a more friendly voice.

"And did not you think I was a sensible fellow," said the amiable guest, "to lie warm and feed well instead of fighting two or three days, or maybe more, through the snow? But now the Courts are opened, and the judges sitting, and everybody waiting for me. I would much rather bide where I am, but I must go."

"If it's for your ain interest," said Dougal: "and I wudna wonder but ye're a wee tired of seeing naebody and doing naething, no even a gun on your shoulder. I'll bid the laddie be ready, I'll say at sax o' the clock."

"Six o'clock," said Ronald, in dismay, "the coach does not not leave till ten."

"Weel, I'll say aicht if you like. You should be down in good time. Whiles there are a heap of passengers and mair especial after a storm like this, that has shut up a' the roads."

"I shall be very much obliged to you, Dougal. I have been obliged to you all the time. I will explain the circumstances to Sir Robert if he is in Edinburgh in the spring, and I will tell him that Katrin and you have been more than kind."

"Deed, and if I were you," said Dougal, "I would just keep a calm sough and say naething to

Sir Robert. He might wonder how ye got here—he would maybe no think that our young leddy—I'm wanting no certificate frae anny strange gentleman," said Dougal, "and least said is soonest mended. There are folk that canna bide to hear their ain house spoke of by a stranger, nor friends collecting about it that might maybe no just be approved. No, no, haud you your tongue and keep your ain counsel: and so far as things have gaen, you'll hear nae more about it frae Katrin or me."

Ronald was confounded by this speech. "So far as things have gaen"—had this rough fellow any idea how far they had gone? Had his wife told him what happened in the Manse parlour? Had his suspicions penetrated the whole story? But Dougal turned back to the pony with a preference so unaffected, and whistled "Charlie is my darling" with so distinct an intention of dismissing his interlocutor, that Ronald could not imagine him to see in the least into the mill-stone of this involved affair. Dougal was much more occupied with his own affairs than either those of Lily or those so very little known to him of the strange gentleman who had kept Lily company during the Daft Days—the Saturnalia of the year. He proceeded with his work, pausing sometimes to swing his arms and smite his breast for cold, clanking out and in through the warm atmosphere of the stable to the wildly cold and sharp air outside, absorbed more than was at all necessary in the meal and the toilet of Rory, and taking no further heed of the guest.

## CHAPTER XXII.

"At last," said Ronald, coming upstairs with his light springing foot three steps at a time, "at last, Lily, I have settled with Dougal, and I am starting to-morrow morning: at eight, he says, but nine will do. And this for a little while, my darling, will be my last night in the nest."

The room had undergone a wonderful change since it had first been Lily's bower. It had changed much while she was there alone, but the change was much greater within the last week than all that had happened before. It had become a home—there were two chairs by the fire, there was an indefinable consciousness in everything of two minds, two people, the union and conjunction

which makes society. It was all warm, social, breathing of life, no suggestion in it of loneliness or longing, or unsatisfied thought, or the solitude which breathes a chill through every comfort. Lily, sitting alone, had been, it was very clear, left but for a moment. This sentiment cannot indeed expand stone walls, yet the once dull and chilly drawing-room, with its deep small windows, seemed to possess a widened circle, a fuller atmosphere. Into this already had there pushed a care or two, the reflection of the diversities of two minds, as well as their union? if so, it only helped to widen the sphere still further, to make it more representative of the world. Lily looked up from the book she had taken up in her husband's absence with a change of countenance and sudden exclamation.

"You are going to-morrow? not *we*?" she cried.

"My bonnie Lily, you were always reasonable—how could it be *we*? I'm thankful though that you meant it to be *we*—for it was not a happy thought that my own lassie, my wife of a week old, was pushing me away, back with the first loosening of the frosts, into the world."

"You never thought that—you never could have thought that!" cried Lily, divided between indignation and a tumult of new feeling that rose in her. And then she covered her face with her hands. "Are you going to leave me here, Ronald, my lane, my lane?" she cried, with a tone of anguish in her voice.

He was behind her, drawing her head upon his shoulder, soothing her in every way he knew. "Oh, Lily, my darling, don't say I have beguiled you! What could it be else, what could it be? I might have held out by myself and kept away. I might have sworn I would never go near you, for your sweet sake. Would you rather I had done that, Lily? Is it not better to belong to each other, my darling, at any cost, so as to be ready in a moment to take advantage of a bright day when it comes?"

"Of a bright day when it comes?" she said, suddenly taking her hands from her face. A chill as if of the ice outside came upon Lily. She was as white as the snow, and cold, and trembled—"Is that all, is that all that is between you and me, Ronald?" she cried.

"Now, Lily, my dearest, how can you ask such a question?—is that all? nothing is all! There are no bounds to what is between you and me: but

because we have to be parted for a time, that was not a reason for always keeping apart, was it, Lily? I thought, my darling, you agreed with me there. We have had a happy honeymoon as ever any pair had—happier, I think, than ever any blessed man but me—. And now I must go out to the bleak world to work for my bonnie wife. Oh, it will be a bleak world no longer, it will all be bright with the thought that it is for my bonnie Lily. And you will just wait and keep your heart in a kist of gold, and lock it with a silver key.”

“Ah, that was what she says she should have done before—” cried Lily, with a sharp ring of pain in her voice. Then she subdued herself and looked up into his face. “I am ready to share whatever you have, Ronald. I want no luxuries—no grand house. I want no time to get ready. I’ll be up before you to-morrow and my little things in a bundle and ready to follow you—if it was in a baggage-waggon or at the plough’s tail!”

“I almost wish it was that,” he said, eager for any diversion. “If I had been a ploughman lad, coming over the hills to Nannie, oh; with a little cot to take her to, as soon as she could be my own.” These were echoes of the songs Lily had sung to him, and he to her, in their hermitage when shut in by the snow.

“But just up under the roof in a high house in the old town—or one of the new ones out to the west of Princes Street—that new row, with a nice clean stair and a door to it, to shut it in; to me that would be as good as any little cot upon the ploughed fields.” Lily spoke eagerly, turning round to him with hands involuntarily clasped.

“A strange place,” he said, “for Sir Robert Ramsay’s heir.”

“Oh, what am I caring for Sir Robert Ramsay! If he was ill and wanted me, I would be at his call night and day—he is my uncle, whatever happens; but because he is rich and can leave me a fortune! that is nothing Ronald, to you and me.”

He made no immediate reply, but smoothed the little curls of her hair upon her forehead, which was at once an easier and a much more pleasant thing to do.

“Besides,” she said, “I have known plenty of kent folk, as good as you or me, who lived and just liked it very well, up a common stair.”

“I would not like my Lily, coming out of Moray Place, to set up in life like that.”

“Would you like your Lily,” she cried, again turning upon him with glowing cheeks, “to sit alone and pingle at her seam and eat her heart away, even at Moray Place, where she might see you whiles—or worse still here, at Dalrugas,” she said, springing from her seat with energy, “to be smooored in the snow?”

He followed her round to the window, and stood holding her in his arm and looking at her admiringly. “You will never be smooored in the snaw, my Lily! The fire in you is enough to melt it into rivers all about.”

“Rivers that will carry me—where?” she cried in a tone half of laughter, half of despair.

“Listen to me, my darling,” he said. “We will be practical: there is always the poetry to fall back upon. For one thing—I’ve no house, even if it were up a common stair or in the highest house of the old town, to take you to. Houses, as you know as well as me, can only be got at the term. There is no chance now till Whitsunday of finding one. We must just be patient, Lily, we can do no more. It is not you, my darling, that will suffer the most. Think of me in all the old places that will mind me of you at every moment, and seeing all the folk that know you, and even hearing your name—”

“Oh,” cried Lily—and then suddenly she fell a crying, leaning on her husband—“I would like to hear your name now and then, just to give me heart: and to see the folk that know you, and the old places—”

“My bonnie Lily!” he cried.

Perhaps this outburst did her good. She cried for a long time, and all the evening an occasional sob interrupted her voice, like the lingering passion of a child. But Lily, like a child, had to yield to that voice of the practical—the voice of reason. She said no more at least, but sadly assisted at the packing of the portmanteau which had been brought across the snow somehow from the cottage in which Ronald had found refuge before the storm and all its privileges began.

“I am not going with him,” she said to Robina when these doleful preparations were over. “You see there are no preparations made, and you cannot get a house between the terms. You might have minded me of that, Beenie. What is the use of being a person of experience if you cannot tell folk that are apt to forget?”

"I ought to have minded, my bonnie dear," said Beenie with penitence.

"And it's a long time till Whitsunday: but we'll need to have patience," Lily said.

"So we will, my darling bairn," Beenie replied.

"You say that very cut and dry. You are not surprised, you look as if you had known it all the time."

"Eh, Miss Lily, my dear, how could I help but ken? Here's a young gentleman that has little siller, and no the mate that Sir Robert would choose."

"I wish," cried Lily, "that Sir Robert was at the bottom of the sea! No, no, I'm wishing him no harm—but oh, if he only had nothing to do with me."

"The only thing ye canna do in this world is to change your blood and kin," said Beenie, "but oh, Miss Lily, ye must just be real reasonable and think. If he were to take you away it would spoil a'. He has gotten you for his ain, and you have gotten him for your ain, and nothing can come between you two. But he hasna the siller to give ye such a down-sitting as you should have, and nae house at all possible at this time of the year. No, I'm no way surprised. I just knew that was how it had to be—and Katrin too. It would be just flyin' in the face of Providence, she says, to take ye away off to Edinburgh, without a place for the sole of your foot—when ye have a' your uncle's good house at your disposition, and good living and folk about you that tak' a great interest in you. Katrin herself, she canna bide the thought of losing her bonnie ledly. 'If Miss Lily goes, I'll just take my fit in my hand and go away after her,' she says. But what for should ye go? It will be far more comfortable here."

"Comfortable!" said Lily in high disdain, "and parted from my husband." The word was not familiar to her lips, and it brought a flush of colour over her face.

"Oh whisht, my bonnie ledly," Beenie cried.

"Why should I whisht, for it is true? I might not have said it before, but I will say it now, for where he is I ought to be—and whatever he has I ought to share—and what do I care for Dougal's birds and Katrin's fine cooking when my Ronald (that has aye a fine appetite for his dinner," cried Lily, in a parenthesis with a flash of her girlish humour) is away?" The last words were said in a drooping tone. Her mood changed like the chang-

ing skies. Even now she had eruptions of laughter into the midst of her trouble, which was not yet trouble indeed, so long as he was still not absolutely gone: and who could tell what might happen before morning—the chill morning of the parting day?

Lily was up and astir early on that terrible morning—there had been a hope in her mind that Providence would re-tighten the bonds of the frost and bring the snow blinding and suffocating to stop all possibility of travel; but, alas, that was not the case—bands of faint blue diversified the yellow greyness of the clouds, and the early sun gave a bewildering glint over the moor, making the snow garment shrink a little more and show its rents and crevices. Everything was cheerfully astir in the yard, the black pony rearing as Sandy backed him into the shafts of the cart, snorting and shaking his head for joy at thought of the outing, and the sniff of the fresh, exhilarating air into which, as yet, there had come little of the limpness of the thaw. There was an air out of doors partly of pleasure in the excitement of the departure, or, at least, in the little commotion about something which is an agreeable break in the monotony of all rural solitudes. Dougal looked on and criticized with his hands in his pockets and gave Sandy directions as if this were the first time the boy had ever touched the pony which had been his charge for more than a year: and Katrin too stood at the door watching all these preparations, though the air was cold as January air could be. Upstairs there was a very different scene. Lily had tried to insist upon driving to the town to see her husband off, a proposal which was crushed by both Ronald and Robina with horror. "Expose yourself to the whole countryside!" Beenie cried."

"Expose myself! and me his wife! Who should see him off if not his wife?" said Lily. And then Ronald came behind her and drew her against his breast once more.

"My bonnie Lily! We need not yet flourish that before the world: you are as safe here as a bird in its nest: why should we set everybody talking about you and me? Sir Robert will hear soon enough and there is no need to send him word. There's nobody to penetrate our secret and publish it, if you will be patient a little till better things can be."

"Our secret!" said Lily, springing from his hold with a great cry.

"A secret that is well shared by those that care for my Lily: but we need not flourish it before the world." Lily's colour rose from pale to red, then faded. She stood apart from him, her countenance changing: her pride was deeply wounded that she should be supposed to be desirous of flourishing anything before the world. It was an injury to her and a scorn, though this was no moment to resent it, and the sharp impression only mingled with the anguish of parting a sense of being wronged and misjudged, which was very hard to bear. "I may come down to the door, I suppose," she said, in a voice from which she tried to banish every tone of offence.

"No, my darling," he said, "not even to the door. I could not say farewell to my Lily with strangers looking on. I will like to think when I am gone of everything round you here—all the old chairs and tables even, where my Lily and I have had our honeymoon." Oh, there was nothing to complain of in the warmth of his farewell. No man could have loved his young wife better, or have held her close to him with deeper feeling. "I will soon be back, I will soon be back!" he cried: his eyes were wet like hers. It was as great a thing for him to tear himself away as it was for her to remain behind and see him go. But then Lily could only stand trembling and weeping at the head of the stairs, that nobody might see, and catch a distorted glimpse through the window over the door of the cart into which he got with Sandy, while Dougal still murmured that "a stoot gentleman would have done better to walk:"—and to see him hold out his hand to sulky Dougal, and to Katrin, who had her apron at her eyes, and Beenie, who was sobbing freely! They could stand there and cry, but she might not go downstairs lest she should flourish her story before the world. And why should she not, after all, flourish it before the world? Is a marriage a thing to be hid? When the little cart drove away—the pony, very fresh after his long confinement, executing many gambols—Lily went back to her window from which she could see them disappear under the high bank, coming out again lower down. The deep road was so filled up with snow that the moment of disappearance was a very short one, and then she could trace for a

long time along the road the little dark object growing less and less, till it disappeared altogether. The pony's gambols which, though he was too far off to be distinctly visible, still showed in the meandering of his progress, and sudden changes of pace, the head of one figure showing over the other, the gradual obliteration in the grey of distance kept all her faculties occupied. It seemed hours, though it was but a very little time when Lily let her head droop on the arm of the old-fashioned sofa and abandoned herself to the long gathering, long restrained torrent and passion of tears.

It was a heavy, dreary day. When you begin life very early in the morning, it ought to be for something good, for some natural festivity or holiday—in the light of which the morning goes brightening on to some climax, be it a happy arrival for which the moments are counted, or a birthday party. But to begin with a parting and live the livelong day after it, every hour more mournful and more weary, is a melancholy thing. This used to be very common in the old days, when travelling was slower, and night trains not invented, and night coaches not much thought of. It added a great deal to the miseries of a farewell:—in the evening there is but little time before the people who are left behind, they have an excuse for shutting themselves up—going to bed—most likely, if they are young, sleeping before they know—with to-morrow always a new day before them. But Lily had to live it all out, not excused by Beenie or her other faithful retainers a single hour or a single meal. They brought her her dinner just as though he had not shared it with her yesterday, and pressed her to eat, and made a grievance of the small amount she swallowed. "What is the use," Katrin said, majestically, "of taking all this trouble when Miss Lily turns her back upon it and will not eat a morsel?" "Oh, try a wee bit, Miss Lily," Beenie cried—adding in her ear, with a coaxing kindness that was insupportable, "do you think he would relish the cauld snack he'll be getting on the road if he thought his bonnie ledly was not touching bite or sup?"

"Go away, or you will drive me daft," said Lily. "He will just clear the board of everything that's on it and never think of me. Why should he, with such a fine appetite as he has? Do I want him to

starve for me?" she cried, with a laugh. But the result was another fit of tears. In short, Lily was as silly as any girl could be on the day her lover left her. She was not even as she had been for a moment, and was bound to be again, a young wife astonished and disappointed at being left behind, not knowing how to account for this strange, new authority over her, which had it in its power to change the whole current of her life. She had never looked at Ronald in that light or thought of him as a power over her—a judge, a law-giver, whose decisions were to be supreme. She was astonished to find herself subdued before him now, her own convictions put aside, but this was not the channel in which for the moment her thoughts were running. She was weeping for her lover, for the happiness that was over, for him who was away, and dreaming dreams to herself of how the coach might be stopped by the snow, or some accident happen that would still bring him back. She imagined to herself his step on the stair and the shriek of joy with which she would rush to welcome him. This was the subject of her thoughts, broken into occasionally by divergences to other points, by outbursts of astonishment, of disappointment, almost of resentment, but always returning as to the background and foundation of everything. The other thoughts lay in waiting for her, biding their time. It was the dreadful loss, the blank, the void, the silence that afflicted her now. Ronald gone, who, for this week, which had been as years, as a whole life, her life, the real and true one to which all the rest was only a preface and preliminary—had been her companion, almost herself! It was of this that her heart was full. Without him what was Lily now? She had been often a weary, angry, dull, disappointed little girl before, but there were always breaks in which she felt herself, as she said, her own woman, and was herself, all the Lily there was. But now she had merged into another being, she was Lily no longer, but only a broken off half of something different, something more important, all throbbing with enlarged and bigger life. This consciousness was enough for the girl to master during that endless, dreary, monotonous day.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

THE next day after anything, whether happiness or disaster, is different from the day on which the event took place. The secondary comes in to complicate and confuse the original question more or less, and the abstract ends under that compulsion. Nothing is exactly as it seems, nor indeed as it is—it takes a colour from the next morning, however opaque that morning may be. This was especially the case with Lily, whom so many of these secondary thoughts had already visited, and who had now to go back from the dream of that eight days in which everything had been put to flight by that extraordinary invasion of the new and unrealised which comes to every girl with her marriage, and amid which it is so difficult to keep the footing of ordinary life. She was that morning, however, not any longer the parted lover, the mourning bride, but again, more or less, "her own woman," the creature, full of energy, and life, and thoughts, and purposes of her own, who had not blindly loved or worshipped, but to whom, at all times it had been apparent that Ronald's way of loving, though it was to her the only way, was not the way she would have chosen or which she would have adopted herself had she been the man. A very different man Lily would have made—much less prudent, no doubt, but how decisive in the beginning of that youthful career! how determined to have no secrets, but everything as open as the day, to involve the woman beloved in no devious paths—but to preserve her name and her honour above all dictates of worldly wisdom. Lily would have had her lover vindicate her at once from her uncle's tyranny. She would have had him provide the humble home for which she longed, without even suffering his lady to bear the ignominy of that banishment to the moor. And now! with what a flame of youthful love and hope Lily would have had him carry off his bride, snapping his fingers with a Highland shout at all the powers of evil, who would have had no chance to touch them in their honest love and honourable union. Oh, if she had been the man! Oh, if she could have showed him what to do!

And all these thoughts, intensified and increased, came back to Lily the day after her husband left her. She was not drooping and longing now for her departed lover. Her energies, her clear sense

of what should have been, her objection to all that was, came back upon her like a flood. She sat no longer at the window gazing out upon the expanse of snow, which shrank more and more, and showed greater and blacker crevasses in its wide expanse every hour—but walked up and down the room, pausing now and then to poke the fire with energy, though the glowing peats were not adapted to that treatment, and flew in tiny morsels about, requiring Beenie's swift and careful ministrations. Lily felt however for one thing, that her position was far better now for expounding her views than it had ever been. A girl cannot press upon her lover the necessity of action. She has to wait for him to take the first step, to urge it upon her, however strongly she may feel the pressure of circumstances, the inexpediency of delay. But now she could plead her own cause, she could make her own claim of right, her statement of what she thought best. She said to herself that she had never yet tried this way. She had been compelled to wait for him to do it: but perhaps it was no wrong thing in him, perhaps it was only exaggerated tenderness for her, desire to save her from privations, or what he thought privations, that had prevented any bolder action, and made him think first of all of saving her from any discomfort. It was possible to think that, and it was very possible to show him now that she cared for no discomfort, that her only desire was to be with him—that it was far, far better for Lily to meet the gaze of the world in her own little house, however small it might be, than hide in the solitude as if there was something about her that should be concealed. This thought made Lily's countenance blaze like the glowing peat. Something about her that should be concealed! a secret hidden away in the heart of the moor, in the midst of the snow—which he, going away from her, would keep silent about—silent as if it were a shame! Lily threw herself into the chair beside her writing table with impetuosity, feeling that not a moment should be lost in putting this impossible case before him and making her claims. She was no fair Rosamond, but his wife—a thing to be concealed: oh no, no! She would rather die.

In any case she would have written him a long letter, seizing the first possible moment of communicating with him—carrying out the first instinct of her heart to continue the long love-interview,

which had made this week the centre of all her days. But Lily threw even more than this into her letter. She said more, naturally, than she intended to say, and brought forth a hundred arguments, each more eloquent, more urgent than the other, to show cause why she should join him immediately, why she should not be left, nobody knowing anything about her in this Highland hermitage. The lines poured from her pen, she was herself so moved by her own pleas, that she got up once or twice and walked about to dissipate the impulse which she had to set out at once, to walk if it were needful to Edinburgh, to claim her proper place. And it was not till the long, glowing, fervent letter was written, that she paused a little and asked herself if Ronald had really only left her behind because it was impossible to get a house between the terms, if his first business was to look out for a house, so as to have it ready for her by the next term, by Whit-Sunday, was it right to argue with him and upbraid him as if he intended the separation to go on for ever? Lily threw down her pen which she had dipped in fire—not the fire of anger but of love just sharpened and pointed with a little indignation, and her countenance fell. No, if that were so, she must not address him in this heroic way. After all it was quite reasonable what he had said—it was extremely difficult to get a house between the terms. And perhaps he would not have been justified in engaging one at Michaelmas, before anything was decided what to do. He could not have done that: and what then could he do but wait till Whit-Sunday? and, for a man like him, with his own ways of action, not unfortunately, though she loved him, like Lily's, it was perhaps natural that there should be no premature disclosure, that as they were parted by circumstances, it should remain so, without taking the world into their confidence, or summoning Sir Robert to cast his niece who had deceived him out of the shelter which her husband did not think unbecoming for her now. Lily threw down her pen, making a splash of ink upon the table, not a large one to spoil it, but a mark—which would always remind her of what she had done or had been about to do.

And then there fell a pause upon her spirit, and tears were the only relief for her. To take the heroic way, to walk to Edinburgh through the snow, or even to think of doing so—to pour forth an

eloquent appeal against the cruel fate of her isolation and concealment as if it were to last for ever, was an easier method than to wait patiently until Whit-Sunday and make the best of everything, which would really be the wise thing—for what could Ronald do more than that which he could of course begin to do as soon as he arrived—to look for a house? And how could it have been expected of him when everything was so vague, and he did not know what might happen, to have provided one, months in advance, on the mere chance that he could persuade her into that strange marriage, and the minister into doing it? It would be strange and embarrassing after that scene to see the minister again, and Lily fell a-wondering how Ronald had persuaded him, what he had said. Mr. Blythe was not a very amiable man, ready to do what was asked from him. He made objections about most things and hated trouble. But Ronald could persuade anybody, he could wile a bird from the tree. And what a grand quality that was for an advocate! and how proud she would be hereafter to go to the court and hear him make his grand speeches. Perhaps now he would talk over some man that wanted to get rid of his house and make him see that it would be better to do it now than to wait for the term. There was indeed nothing that Ronald could not persuade a man into if he tried. Lily felt that her own periods were more fiery, those eloquent sentences which her good sense had already condemned, but Ronald's arguments were beyond reply, there was no getting the better of them. You might not be sure that they were always sound, you might feel that there was a flaw somewhere: but to find out what it was, or to get your answer properly formed, or to convict him of error was more than any one, certainly more than Lily could do.

She had risen up, and was stretching her arms above her head in that natural protest against the languor and solitude which takes the form of weariness, when she saw a dark speck approaching on the road, and rushed to the window with the wild hope, which she knew was quite vain, that it might by some possibility be Ronald coming back. But it was only a rural geeg from Kinloch-Rugas or some other hamlet, or one of the farms in the neighbourhood, creeping up the road against the wind and the slippery thawing snow, with a woman in it beside the driver,

undistinguishable in her wraps. While Lily looked out and wondered if by any chance it might be a visitor, Beenie came in with a look of importance. "Eh, Miss Lily, do you see who that is?" Robina said.

"It is a woman, that is all I know—and keen upon her business to come out on such a day."

"Her business?" said Robina. "It's the Manse geeg, and it's Miss Eelen in it, and as far as I can tell she has nae business, but just to spy out, if she can, the nakedness of the land."

"There is no nakedness in the land, and nothing to spy out," cried Lily with a flush. "Have we done anything to be ashamed of that we should be feared of a neighbour's eye?"

"Bless me, no, Miss Lily!" cried Robina—but she added, "Eh my bonnie bairn, there's many a thing that's no expedient though it's no wrong. I wouldna just say anything to Miss Eelen if I was you. She's maybe no to be trusted with a story. The minister had sent her out o' the road yon evening in the Manse. Baith me and Katrin remarked it: for she's his right hand and he can do nothing without her in a common way: but yon time she just didna appear."

"Did he think I was not good enough?" Lily began in a flutter, but stopped immediately. "What a silly creature I am! as if there could be anything in that. Do you think I have such a long tongue that I want to go and publish to everybody everything that happens?"

"Oh, Miss Lily, no me! never such a thought was in my head: but it would be real natural, and you no a person to speak to except Katrin and me, that are servants baith, though we would go through fire and water for you. But you see she wasna there, and if I were you, Miss Lily——"

"You happen not to be me," cried Lily, with eyes blazing, glad of an opportunity to shed upon Beenie something of the vague irritation in her heart, "and since we are speaking of that, what do you mean, both Katrin and you, that were both present, in calling me Miss Lily, Miss Lily, as if I were a small thing in the nursery, when you know I am a married woman?" Lily cried, throwing back her head.

"Oh, Miss Lily," cried Robina, with a suppressed shriek, running to the door. She looked out with a little alarm, and then came back apologetically. "You never ken who may be about.



That Dougal man might have been passing, though he has nothing ado up the stair."

"And what if he had been passing?" Lily said, in high disdain.

"Oh, Miss Lily," cried Robina, again giving the girl a troubled look.

"Do you mean to say that Dougal does not know? Do you mean he thinks—that man that is my servant, that lives in the house—oh, what can he think?" cried Lily, clasping her hands together in the vehemence of her horror and shame.

"He just thinks nothing at a'. He's no a man to trouble anybody with what he thinks. He's keepit very weel in order, and if he daured to fash his head with what he has nae business with! He just guesses you twa are troth-plighted lovers, Miss Lily, and glad he was to get our young maister away."

Lily covered her face with her hands. "Am I a secret then, a secret!" she cried. "Something that's hidden—just a lie—no true woman! How dared you let me do it, then: you that have been with me all my days? Why did ye not step in and say, 'Lily, Lily, it's all deceiving. It's a secret, something to be hidden!' Would I ever have bound myself to a secret, to be a man's wife and never to say it? Oh, Beenie, I thought you cared, that you were fond of me—and me not a creature to tell me what I was doing! No mother, no friend, nobody but you."

"Miss Lily, Miss Lily, we thought it was for the best. Oh, we thought it was for the best, both Katrin and me! For God's sake dinna make an exhibition before Miss Eelen. Here she is, coming up the stair. For peety's sake, Miss Lily, for a' body's sake, if ye have ainy consideration——"

"Go away from me, you ill woman," cried Lily, stamping her foot on the ground. She stood in the middle of the room, wild and flushed and indignant, while Beenie disappeared into the bed-chamber within. Helen Blythe, coming up a little breathless from the spiral staircase, paused with astonishment to see her friend's excited aspect, and the sounds of tempest in the air.

"Dear me! have I come in at a wrong time?" Helen said.

"Oh no," cried Lily, with a laugh of fierce emotion, "at the very best time, just to bring me back to myself. I've been having a quarrel with Beenie

just for a little diversion. We've been at it hammer and tongs, calling each other all the bonnie names: or perhaps it was me that called her all the names. How do you think we could live out here in the quiet and the snow if we did not have a quarrel sometimes to keep up our hearts?"

"Lily, you are a strange lassie," said Helen, sitting down by the fire and loosening her cloak, "You just say whatever comes into your head. Poor Beenie! how could you have the heart to call her names? She is just given up to ye, my dear, body and soul."

"She is no better than a cheat and a deceiver," cried Lily. "She makes folk believe that she does what I tell her, and never opposes me, when she just sets herself against her mistress to do everything I hate and nothing I like, as if she were a black enemy and ill-wisher instead of a friend!"

This speech was delivered with great fervour, and emphasised by the sound of a sob from the inner room.

"Poor Beenie!" cried Helen, with mingled amusement and concern, "how is she to take all that from you, Lily? But you do not mean it in your heart?"

"No. I don't mean a word of it," cried Lily, "and it's just an old goose she is if she thinks I do. But for all that she is the most exasperating woman! I never saw anybody like her to be faithful as all the twelve apostles, and yet make you dance for rage half the time."

A faint "Oh, Miss Lily!" was heard from the inner room, and then a door was softly opened and shut, and it was evident that Beenie had slipped away.

"I heard ye were down at the Manse one day that I was away. It's seldom, seldom, I am from home, and at that hour above all. But I had to see some new folk at the Mill, and it was a good thing I went, for there has not been an open day since then. And I heard ye had a visitor with you, Lily."

Lily's heart seemed to stand still, but she made a great effort and mastered herself. "Yes," she said, "it was Mr. Lumsden" (many married persons call their husbands Mr. So-and-So) that had come in quite suddenly—with the guisards on the last night of the year."

"I understand," said Helen, with a smile, "he wanted—and I cannot blame him—to be your first foot."

The first person who comes into a house in the New Year is called the first foot, in Scotland, and there are rules of good luck and bad dependent upon who that is.

"It might be so," said Lily, dreamily, "and I think he was, if that was what he wanted: but the kitchen was full of dancing and singing—the guisards making a great noise as it was Hogmanay night."

"That was to be expected," said Helen, "and I am glad you had a man, and a young man, and a weel-wisher, or I am sore mistaken, for your first foot. It brings luck to the New Year."

A "weel-wisher" means a lover, in Scotland: just as in Italy a girl will say, *mi vuol bene*, when she means to say that some one loves her.

"He was here after—twice or thrice—and he wanted to thank the minister for all his kindness, and, as I was at the market, with Beenie and Katrin, and he had offered to drive the pony, I went too. I thought I would have seen you, but you were not there."

"Oh, how sorry I was, Lily! but a sight of the market would ay be something. It's not like your grand ploys in Edinburgh, but it's diverting too."

"Oh yes," said Lily, with great gravity, "it is diverting too."

"And you had need of something to divert you. What have you been doing, my bonnie wee lady, all this dreadful storm? I hope, at least, they have kept you warm. It is a dreadful thing, a winter in the country, when you are not used to it. But now the snow is over and the roads open: you and me must take a little comfort in each other, Lily. I'm too old for you, and not so cheery as I might be."

Lily, suddenly looking at her visitor, saw that Helen's mild eyes were full of tears, and, with one of her sudden impulsive movements, flung herself down on her knees at her friend's feet. "Oh, why are you not cheery, Helen? you that do everything you should do, and are so good."

"Oh, I'm far, far from good! It's little you know!" said Helen. "My heart just turns from all the good folk, whiles, out of a yearning I take for those that are the other way."

"You have some trouble, Helen—some real trouble," cried Lily, with a tone of compassion. "Will you tell me what it is?"

"Maybe another time—maybe another time," said Helen, "for my heart's too full to-day: and I can hear your poor Robina, that you have been so cruel to, coming up the stair, the kind creature, with a cup of tea."

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

HELEN stayed till the first shade of the darkening stole over the moor, and till the minister's man had told all the "clash" of the countryside to Katrin and Dougal, and received but a very limited stock of information in return. There was, indeed, much more danger to the secret which now dominated and filled the house of Dalrugus like an actual personage, from that chatter in the kitchen than from anything that could have taken place upstairs. For the minister's man was dimly aware that the young lady from Dalrugus had been in the village on that day when something mysterious was believed to have taken place in the Manse parlour: that she had been seen with a gentleman, and that Katrin and Robina had also been visible at the Manse. "Ay, was I," said Katrin, "I just took the minister a dizzen of my eggs. In this awfu' weather nobody has an egg but me. I just warm them up and pepper them up till they've nae idea whether it's summer or winter, and we lay regular a' the year round. I never grudge twa-three new laid eggs to a delicate person, and the minister, poor gentleman, is no that strong, I'm feared."

"He's just as strong as a horse," said the minister's man, "and takes his dinner as if he followed the ploo—but new laid eggs are nae doubt aye acceptable. The gentleman was from here, that was paying him yon veesit, twa days after the New Year?"

"We have nae gentleman here," said Katrin, stolid as her own cleanly-scrubbed table, on which she rested her hand. Dougal cocked his bonnet over his right ear, but gave no further sign. "There's been a gentleman—a friend of Sir Robert's—at Tam Robison's, and we had to gie him a bed a nicht or twa on account of the snaw. Now I think o't, he was a friend o' the minister's too. It's maybe him you're meaning? but he's

back in Edinburgh, as far as I ken, these twa-three——”

“Weel, it would be him, or some other person,” said the minister’s man, with an affectation of indifference: but he returned to the subject, again and again, endeavouring, if he had been strong enough for the rôle, or if he had been confronted by a weak enough adversary, to surprise her into some avowal: but Katrin was too strong for him. It was with difficulty she could be got to understand what he meant. “Oh, it’s aye yon same gentleman you’re hawering about! Eh, what would I ken about a strange gentleman? The minister is no my maister nor yet Dougal’s. He might get a visit from Auld Nick himself, and it would be naething to him or me.”

“It might be much to me,” said the minister’s man, who was known for a “bletherin’ idiot” all over the parish. “It’s just a secret: and a secret is aye worth siller.”

“Well, I wish ye may get it,” Katrin said. During this time she was, to tell the truth, more or less anxious about the demeanour of her husband. It was true that Dougal knew nothing, unless what he might have found out for himself, putting two and two together. Katrin had great confidence in the slowness of his intellect and his incapacity to put together two and two. Perhaps her trust was too great in this incapacity, and too little in the dogged loyalty with which Dougal respected his own roof-tree and all that sheltered under it. At least the fact is certain that the authorised gossip of the parish carried very little with him to compensate him for the cold drive and all the miseries of the way.

Lily took out her letter and went over it again when Helen had gone. She found it far too eloquent, too argumentative, too full of a foregone conclusion. Why should she assume that Ronald did not mean to provide a home for her, that there was any reason to believe in an intention on his part of keeping their marriage a secret and their lives apart? All his behaviour during the past week had been against this. How could there have been a more devoted lover—a husband more adoring! She asked herself what there was in him to justify such fears, and answered herself: Nothing, nothing! not a shadow upon his love or delight in her presence, the happiness of being with her, for which he had sacrificed everything

else. He might have spent that New Year amid all the mirth and holiday of his kind: in the merry crowd at home, or in Edinburgh, where he need never have spent an hour alone: and he had preferred to be shut up all alone with her, on the edge of a snowy, wintry moor. Did that look as if he loved her little, as if he made small account of her happiness? Oh no, no! It was she who was so full of doubts and fears, who had so little trust, who must surely love him less than he loved her, or such suggestions would never have found a place in her heart. If she already felt this in the evening, how much more did she feel it next morning, when the post brought her a little note all full of love, and the sweet sorrow of farewell, which Ronald had slipped into the post in the first halting-place beyond Dalrugas? It was written in pencil, it was but three lines: but after she received it Lily indignantly snatched her letter from the blotting book and flung it into the fire, which was too good an end for such a cruel production. Was it possible that she had questioned the love of him who wrote to her like *that*? Was it possible that she, so adored, so longed for, should doubt in her heart whether he did not mean to conceal her like a guilty thing? Far from her be such unkind disloyal thoughts. Ronald had gone off into the world as it is the man’s right and privilege and his duty to do, to provide a nest for his mate. If she were left solitary for a moment, that was inevitable: it was but the natural pause till he should have prepared for her, as every husband did. Instead of the indignation, the resentment, the bitter doubt she had felt, nothing but compunction was now in Lily’s mind. It was not he but she who was to blame. She was the unfaithful one, the weak and wavering soul who could never hold steadily to her faith, but doubted the absent as soon as his back was turned, and was worthy of nothing except to undergo the fate which her feeble affection feared. She was, perhaps, a little high-flown in the revolution of her feelings, as in the fervour of these feelings themselves. A little less might have been expected from Ronald, a little charity extended to him in his short-coming: and certainly the vehemence and enthusiasm of her faith in him now was a little excessive. “Yes, it is better you should call me Miss Lily,” she said to Robina, “it is best just to keep it to ourselves for a while.

Mr. Lumsden thought of all that, though he left it entirely to me, without a word said. There would be so many questions asked—even Dougal—and Helen Blythe. I would have had to summer and winter it, and her not very quick at the uptake. It is a long time till Whitsunday," said Lily, with a little quiver of her lip. "I will just be Miss Ramsay till then."

"Eh, you will aye be Miss Lily to me, whatever," Beenie cried.

"And I am just Miss Lily," said her mistress, with a little air of dignity, which was new to the girl. It was as if a Princess had consented to that humiliation, sweetly, with a grace of self-abnegation which made it an honour the more.

It cannot be denied, however, that it was difficult, after all the agitations that had passed, after the supreme excitement of the New Year, and the short, yet wonderful, union of their life together, to fall back upon that solitude and endeavour, once more, to "take an interest" in the chickens and the ponies, and the humours of Sandy and Dougal, which Lily, in the beginning, had succeeded in occupying herself with, to some extent. She did what she could now to rouse her own faculties to fill her mind with the harmless details of the practical life. How comforting it would have been had she but been compelled to plan and contrive like Katrin for all those practical necessities—how to feed her family, how to make the most of her provisions, how to diet her cows and her hens, or, like Dougal, to care for the comfort of the beasts and amuse himself with Rory's temper, and the remarks that little snorting critic made upon things in general: or even to look over the "napery" and see if it wanted any fine darning, as Beenie did, and to regulate the buttons and strings of the garments and darning of the stockings. Then Lily might have done something, trying hard to make volunteer work into duty, and consequently into occupation and pleasure. But, Beenie being there, she had no need to do what would have simply thrown Beenie, instead of herself, out of work: and this was still more completely the case with Katrin, who, gladly as she would have contributed to the amusement in any way of her little mistress, would have resented, as well as been much astonished by any interference with her own occupations. Lily could not do much more than pretend to be busy, whatever she did. She knitted socks for Ronald:

beguiled by Beenie, she began with a little enthusiasm the manufacture into household necessities of a bale of linen found by Katrin among the stores of the establishment: but stopped soon with shame, asking herself what right she had to take Sir Robert's goods for that "plenishing" of abundant linen, which is dear to every Scotch housewife's heart. This was a scruple which the women could not share. "Wha should have it if no you?" cried Katrin. "Sir Robert he has just presses overflowing with as nice napery as you would wish to see. There is plenty to set up a hoose already, besides what's wanted, and never be missed: let alone that except yourself, my bonnie Miss Lily, there is nae person to use thae fine sheets. But the auld leddy's web that she had woven at the weaver's, and never lived to make it up—wha should have it, I should like to know, but you?"

"Not while my uncle is the master, Katrin."

"I've nothing to say against Sir Robert," cried Katrin, "he's our maister, it's true, and no an ill maister, just gude enough as maisters go—but the auld leddy was just your ain grandmother, Miss Lily, and your plenishing would come out of her hands in the course of nature, and for wha but you would she have given all that yarn (that she span herself, most likely), to be made into a bonnie web o' linen? There is not a word to be said, as Robina will tell ye as weel as me. It's just a law afore a' the laws that a woman has her daughter's plenishing to look to, as soon as the bairn is born—and her bairn's bairn with a' the stronger reason, the only one that is left in the auld house."

"Eh, Miss Lily, that's just as sure as death," Beenie said.

But Lily was not to be convinced. She flung the great web of linen, in its glossy and slippery whiteness, at the two anxious figures standing by her, involving them both in its folds. "Take it yourselves then," she said, with a laugh. "I am an honest lass in one way, if not in another: I will have none of grandmamma's linen that belongs to Sir Robert and not to me."

And then Lily snatched her plaid from the wardrobe and wrapped it round her, and ran out from all their exclamations and struggles, for a ramble on the moor. Oh, the moor was cold these February days—the frost was gone and everything was running wet with moisture, the turf

between the ling bushes yielding like bog beneath the foot, the long, withered stalks of the heather flinging off showers of water at every touch, the black cuttings gleaming, the burn running fast and full. Lily began a devious course between the hummocks, leaping from one spot to another, as she had done with Ronald, saturating herself with the chilly freshness, as well as with the actual moisture of the moor; but this was an amusement which soon palled upon the girl alone. She felt the exercise fatigue her. And the contrast between her solitude and the hand so ready and so eager to help her, was more than she could bear. It was because they had to cling to each other so, because the mutual help was so sweet that they had loved it. Lily was reluctantly obliged to confess that it was no fun alone, and though it was a relief to walk, even a little on the road, that was but a faint alleviation of the monotony of life. Sometimes the aspect of the mountains stole her from herself, or a sudden pageant of sunset, or something of a darker drama going on, if she had but any interpretation of it, among those hills. Anything going on, if it were but the gathering of the mist and the scent of the coming storm, was a relief to Lily. It was the long blank—not a passenger on the road, not an event in the day—which she could not bear.

And then, even if the walk, by dint of a sunset or some other occurrence, had been enlivening, there was always the shock of coming back, the shutting of her door against every invasion of life, the quiet that might have been comfort to her old grandmother—the old Leddy who had spun the yarn for that web of linen, and received it home with triumph—was it for the plenishing of Lily unborn? Lily came to have a little horror of that old Leddy. She figured her to herself spinning, spinning, the little whirr of the wheel in its monotony going on for day after day. Lily did not think of the sons away in the world: Robert, wherever there was fighting; her own father always in trouble—that filled the old Leddy's thoughts, which were spun into that yarn, and might have made many a pattern of mystic meaning in the cold snowy linen which looked so meaningless. She used to sit in the silent room, feeling that from some corner the old Leddy's eye was fixed upon her over the whirring wheel, till she could bear it no more.

She went down to Kinloch-Rugas to return Helen's visit, but that was not a happy experience. The old minister, half seen in the gloaming, seated like a large shadow by the fire, gave her always a thrill of alarm. She had hoped that he would not have treated her as a secret, that he would have addressed her by her new name, and set her at once in a true position. But he did not do this. He looked at her not unkindly, and spoke to her with a compassionate tone in his voice. But he too seemed to accept the necessity which had been forced on her by a kind of unspoken command, a dilemma from which she could not escape. In that case the consciousness of being in the presence of a man who knew all, but made no sign, sitting there by the side of innocent Helen, who knew nothing, and who treated herself in all simplicity as the girl-Lily, the same as she had known before—was intolerable: and Lily did not go back again—much as the refuge of some other house to go to was wanted—in her desolate state. "You'll come and see me, Helen?" "That will I, my dear. You must not mind my father. He is kind—kind in his heart, and always a soft place for you." "I am not thinking that he is unkind," said Lily. Ah no, the minister was not unkind! He was sorry for the young abandoned wife, for—as he thought—the young betrayed woman: and Lily, though she was not aware of this last aggravation, yet resented it, feeling the pity in his tone. And why should any one pity her, or venture to be sorry for her, and she with no secret in her own honest intention, Ronald Lumsden's lawful wife?

As the days lengthened it was possible to be out of doors more, and Lily began to scour the country upon Rory, and to see, though in the doubly cold aspect of this formidable northern spring, many places about in which, in more genial weather, when "the families" were at home, there might be friends to be made. She had come home tired from one of these rides, and the day having been dry, had ventured a little on the moor, holding up her riding skirt, and looking towards the western hills, where a great sunset was about to be accomplished and all the unseen spectators were hastily putting on garments of gold and rose-colour and robes of purple for the ceremony. It was not like a mere bit of limited sky, but a world of colour, one hue of glory surging up after another as from

some great treasury in the depths below, changing, combining, deepening, melting away in every kind of magical circle. Lily's heart was not very light, but it rose instinctively to that wonderful display of nature. Oh, how beautiful it was! Oh, if there had only been some one to whom to say that it was beautiful! Whether it was the glorious colour half blinding her with excessive radiance, or the thought of the unshared spectacle, Lily's eyes filled full of tears. Either cause was enough. At Lily's age, and in such circumstances as hers, the tears are not slow to come.

And then in a moment she felt a touch upon her waist and a voice in her ear. "Was it ever like this before, my Lily, my Lily? or has it all lighted up for you and me, and because I am back again?"

There is one compensation for those who suffer from great anxiety, from the misery of separation, from longing after things that seem unattainable. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, a flood of blessedness comes over them in the momentary attainment, the momentary meeting, the instantaneous relief. It was like a warm tide that flooded the heart of Lily, sweeping every fancy and every doubt away. She leaned her head upon his shoulder, and murmured in her rapture, "Oh, Ronald, you've come back!"

"Did you think I could keep away from you?" he said. No, no, how could he have kept away from her? He had come to claim her—as he had always intended to claim her—now, this moment, before the world.

(*To be continued.*)

## WAGNER'S DRAMA:

### "DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN."

BY R. FARQUHARSON SHARP.

#### III.—SIEGFRIED.

WITH the adventures of the boyish hero Siegfried the drama of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* enters upon a fresh stage. Hope, and not despair, is the prevailing note. Wotan—having, by the sacrifice of all he loved best, made atonement for his fault—realises that nothing is left for the gods but to await their doom, and that the freedom of the world from the Nibelung's curse is to be won in a manner other than he had originally planned. On the other hand the hero Siegfried, begotten of Wotan's own blood, is presented as achieving the feats which shall set the world aright, though in ignorance of the full significance of his acts.

*Siegfried* has been called "the apotheosis of youth"—the triumph of unsophisticated innocence over the powers of darkness. This idea—no uncommon one in poetry and drama—had always a great attraction for Wagner; witness the characters of Senta in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, Elsa in *Lohengrin*, Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser*, and Parsifal in the drama which bears his name. It may be noted that both in *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*, Wagner follows much more closely

the lines of the Scandinavian myths dealing with the exploits of Sigurd, as he is there called.

In the forest, in whose nethermost recesses the giant Fafner, in dragon's shape, guards the fateful gold, Sieglinde has died in giving birth to her son Siegfried. He has been cared for since that day by Mime, the Nibelung, brother of the Nibelung Alberich who was the original ravisher of the gold from its maiden guardians. Mime has brought up Siegfried to manhood in ignorance of his parentage or his destiny, in the idle hope that the youth may one day win for him the Ring from Fafner's keeping, and so the power may once more pass into the Nibelung's hand.

In unconscious fulfilment of fate, Siegfried has urged Mime to forge him a sword; but all the Nibelung's art is unavailing, for every sword he makes is ruthlessly broken by the youth at its first essaying. Mime possesses the fragments of Siegmund's sword which Sieglinde bore with her as a priceless heirloom for her son; but it is only at Siegfried's vehement request, and in terror at his strength and daring, that the dwarf delivers up the precious splinters of steel. Mime himself is unable to forge the sword anew, for none but one "who knows no fear" may do so; and he is full



THE FORGING OF THE MAGIC SWORD.



of apprehension lest, with this invincible weapon in his hands, Siegfried shall turn his prowess to his own account and not to that of his evil-minded foster-father.

In the course of *Siegfried* Wotan appears upon the scene only as an agent in the working of destiny. He knows that his power is at an end, and acquiesces in the fact, feeling a noble pride in the certainty that it is to be through the doughty deeds of his off-spring that the world is to be redeemed. In an interview with Mime, to whom he comes in the guise of the Wanderer, his prophetic words make it clear to the Nibelung that it is Siegfried who shall forge the sword and with it win the gold.

Upon this follows the famous scene of the forging of the magic sword "Nothung," whose strength Siegfried tests by a mighty blow which cleaves the anvil in twain. Mime is overwhelmed with terror and amazement; the only hope left to him is that by ingratiating himself with Siegfried, he may induce him, by persuasion or by treachery, to deliver over to him the coveted Ring, of whose power the young hero is ignorant.

The second scene takes place deep in the recesses of the forest, in front of the cave where Fafner, the giant-dragon, guards his hoard of gold. Hither Mime is bringing Siegfried, at the latter's request, who, undismayed at Mime's recital of the dangers to be encountered, is only eager to encounter them and put his good sword to the proof.

But before they reach the spot we once more behold Wotan, again the harbinger of fate, engaged in a none too dignified mutual recrimination with Alberich, who, ever since the gods tricked him of the gold, has nourished an impotent desire to regain it. Wotan, however, with the dignity of sad experience rises superior to his taunts, and, as he disappears, proclaims to the Nibelung the idleness of his hopes of power. Alberich withdraws in moody thought, and at break of day Siegfried and Mime arrive at the cave.

Mime is continually beset with terror lest their coming should awaken the dreaded dragon from his sleep, but Siegfried laughs at his fears, and bids him leave him alone to face his adversary. Here Mime has told him that he will at length learn what fear is; he is curious to know what this new emotion may be, and incredulous as to its reality.

Left alone, Siegfried throws himself upon a mossy bank at the foot of a tree, and gives the rein to his thoughts, which are full of sadness at his solitary lot—without mother or father, brothers or sisters. Do all mothers, he pathetically asks, die when their children are born? His mournful reflections are interrupted by the song of a bird perched on a bough over his head, and its liquid tones he endeavours to imitate upon a reed cut from the thicket. In his longing for companionship he thinks that if he could but reproduce those notes, he might understand and converse with his feathered playmate. He fails to elicit any but the most discordant sounds, and with youthful impetuosity throwing down the reed, he takes up his horn upon which he blows a stirring call.

The sound of this rouses the dragon, which rears its hideous head at the mouth of the cave and roars out complaint and defiance, to the amusement of Siegfried, who asks of it whether it can teach him this "fear," whose nature he would fain understand. Infuriated, the dragon incites him to an attack, and a terrific combat follows, the result of which is that Siegfried's invincible sword is plunged to the hilt in the monster's heart.

In its dying groans the dragon tells him of its real nature, and bewails the curse of the gold which has now overtaken the giant Fafner in his turn. He asks the name of the rash youth whose daring has slain him, and, on hearing that it is Siegfried, falls dead. As Siegfried withdraws his sword from the dragon's breast, its keen edge cuts him. He instinctively carries his hand to his mouth, when the touch of a drop of the dragon's blood which has spurted over his fingers burns his lips like fire.

His surprise at this is surpassed by his amazement when he finds that he is now able to understand the voices of the birds, which have broken out into song at the dragon's death; and from the notes of the bird which before had sung to him he learns that the precious Ring and "Tarnhelm" are in the cavern where the dragon guarded them, and that if he takes them the mastery of the world will be his.

For this incident, in common with most of those in *Siegfried*, Wagner was indebted to the Sagas where the gift of understanding the voices of the birds was held to be conferred by the eating of dragons' or serpents' hearts.





SIEGFRIED SLAYING THE DRAGON.

No sooner has Siegfried disappeared into the cave in search of the treasures than Alberich and Mime creep out of the wood on different sides, and an angry scene ensues between them. Alberich is full of wrath and despair at the thought that the gold has passed into the hands of so invincible a foe, but the crafty Mime maintains that he knows how he may overcome Siegfried by guile, and even yet win the treasure from him. His design is foiled by a second warning to Siegfried from the mouth of the bird. It bids him beware of Mime's pretence of affection, and tells him that his new powers will enable him to detect the real purport of Nibelung's words under their plausible show of love and devotion.

Consequently when Mime returns, full of praise of the young hero's valour, to offer him a refreshing draught, Siegfried recognises his true design and the poison that is in the cup. Drawing his sword in a fit of anger, he strikes Mime dead, and as he throws the body contemptuously into the cave the sardonic laugh of Alberich is heard in the distance.

Overcome once more by his feelings of loneliness, Siegfried craves fresh counsel of his songster friend, who now sings to him of a beautiful maid lying asleep on a rock girt by a rampart of flame through which only he "who knows no fear" may pass to win his bride. Fired with the new emotion of the dawn of love, and eager for new adventures, Siegfried springs up and entreats the bird to lead him to this wonderful spot: for not even the dragon's wrath has been able to make him know fear, and it is he, as he joyfully exclaims, who must win this maiden. The bird flutters away through the wood, and Siegfried rushes after it in all the joy of anticipation and newly found power.

In a wild spot at the foot of the mountain where Brünnhilde sleeps, we meet with Wotan for the last time. Here the god summons from her mysterious abode in the depths of the earth the all-wise Erda, to tell her that her wisdom is of no more avail, and that the end of the gods is at hand. She blames him for punishing Siegmund and Brünnhilde and so abandoning his cherished project: but Wotan sorrowfully bids her learn that his design is altered, and that he no more hopes to withstand his doom, which now approaches him by his will. His sin is expiated, and he will bow to destiny and consign the dominion of the world

to other hands, comforted only by the knowledge that happiness is to be restored to it through the deeds of a hero begotten of his own race.

The grandeur of this scene, and its deep moral significance, give to it much of the majesty of *Æschylean* tragedy. Its significance is heightened by what immediately follows. Siegfried arrives upon the scene, still following his bird guide, which here flutters away to the summit of the mountain. Perplexed, Siegfried looks eagerly for the way which is to lead to his bride, but finds his advance barred by a wandering stranger, as he deems Wotan to be. To his willing ears Siegfried relates his adventures—his slaughter of the dragon, his miraculous understanding of the bird's song and his strange guidance to this spot.

The youth's impetuous masterfulness leads to angry words between the two, and, on Siegfried's seeking to force his way past him, Wotan stretches his spear across the path as if to bar the way. With a triumphant laugh Siegfried draws his sword, a single blow from which shatters the spear of the god.

Thus ends Wotan's power. No more has his hand the power to check the march of fate, nor, indeed, would he now choose to do so. He has deliberately laid down his freedom of will as a part of his expiation; and it was merely to prove Siegfried's valour, and with no real hope of restraining him, that his spear had opposed the youth's advance. With a cry which proclaims his helplessness in the face of the inevitable, the god disappears.

It is perhaps not well to dwell too much upon the ethical side of what is primarily a picturesque drama; but it may be justifiably pointed out that this incident contains the moral of the whole fable—to wit, that the power which has abused its strength is destroyed by the very arms which it had forged for its own defence. In just punishment of his original lapse from his sacred pledge, Wotan is obliged, one by one, to renounce all his hopes: and though this hero, begot of his own race, is to redeem the world from the consequences of his sin, the god's power is unavailing to escape the stern decree of Right. The world has been robbed of innocence by the sin of the gods, therefore punishment must overtake them. Wotan's spear, the symbol of the power of the old gods, is shattered by the sword of Siegfried which typifies the new force working in the world.

In the old mythologies, where the gods are but sublimated men and women, these deities are prone to the faults and weaknesses of mortals, but this idea of punishment for their misdeeds is essentially Teutonic. For example, the Greek gods and goddesses might indulge in flagrant infractions of the moral law, but no idea of a catastrophe as resulting therefrom entered into the Greek mythology. In the Northern myths the notion of punishment and annihilation means the irresistible advance of a new system of religion. The old gods, with their lovable picturesqueness and very human failings, must disappear, and this conception of a doom which approached partly with, and partly against, their will was of necessity evolved as the most dignified explanation of their fall.

Exulting in the invincible power of his sword, Siegfried rushes towards the wall of flame which he perceives at the summit of the mountain, and as he dashes into the midst of the fire we hear the exulting strains of his horn.

Triumphantly he passes through this new ordeal, and on emerging at the mountain top is struck dumb with amazement at the sight of Brünnhilde,

who lies asleep, clad in her Valkyr's armour, as she was when Wotan bade her farewell. At last Siegfried, with wondering eagerness, lifts her shield and breastplate from her, and with a long and tremulous kiss awakens into the life of a mortal maiden the whilom Valkyr.

The scene which follows runs through the gamut of human passion, —in Brünnhilde's awakening to the glorious light of day, her rapturous greeting to the sun and the world, her maidenly terror at the sight of her deliverer, her instinctive repulsion of him as one who would offer insult to one of divine birth, her sudden recollection of her fate and doom, and at last the birth of the new and conquering emotion of love, as with a passionate cry she falls into the arms of the splendid hero whose dauntless courage has won her for his own.

Henceforth she is a woman, and no goddess ; henceforth she is concerned with the lives and the passions of mortals, in whose destiny her ideal purity and heroic self-abnegation is to play an all-important part.

And so we reach the end of the second stage in the drama.

## A STRONG-MINDED WOMAN.

“STRONG-MINDED woman ?” She—so frail a thing,  
 So fair and timid, soft of voice and sweet,  
 In whom so many tendernesses meet—  
 A creature who, 'twould seem, was made to cling ?  
 You said it ; so methought her voice would ring  
 Imperiously, would bid and not entreat ;  
 Her eye quail not, nor falter her firm feet  
 Along the path where high ambitions spring.  
 What say you ?—that a nobler strength has she,  
 A strength to love e'en fallen souls and vile,  
 To wield, unseen, a patient influence,  
 To hope, though dark the wide horizon be,  
 To walk unspotted through a world of guile,  
 Safe in the mailèd might of innocence.

# HARPS AND HARPERS.

BY WALLACE CROWDY.

"'Tis believed that this harp, which I wake now for thee,  
Was a Syren of old who sang under the sea ;  
And who often, at eve, through the bright waters roved,  
To meet, on the green shore, a youth whom she loved.

But she loved him in vain, for he left her to weep.  
And in tears, all the night, her gold tresses to steep ;  
Till heav'n looked with pity on true love so warm,  
And changed to this soft harp the sea-maiden's form.

Still her bosom rose fair—still her cheeks smiled the same,  
While her sea-beauties gracefully formed the light frame :  
And her hair, as, let loose, o'er her white arm it fell,  
Was changed to bright chords utt'ring melody's spell."



THUS writes Thomas Moore, the graceful and melodious Irish poet, as to the origin of the harp, and, be his version the true one or not, we have no other to offer.

Certain it is that the harp has accompanied mankind "down the sands of time," from at least the days of Jubal—the seventh in de-

scendent from Adam—till now. Has it ever occurred to any of our readers to reflect how very few of the works of man have done the same? It is often said, of course, that "there is nothing new under the sun," and it is an axiom which—except in the abstract—it is not easy to realise in many cases. This difficulty is especially apparent, perhaps, in such inventions as those connected with electricity and steam; yet when we consider that both electricity and steam have existed from the world's commencement—although but recently applied to the several purposes under which we know them—we see at once the truth of the axiom in their case. But with regard to the organ and the harp, which might not ineptly be styled the "Adam and Eve" of musical instruments—if not of all manufactures—it is different. They have come down "the ages all along," and our forefathers for thousands and thousands of years have known both instruments as we know them to-day; although to exist in this wonderful nineteenth century of ours, it was necessary that they should be provided with "all the latest improvements." We are impressed by the antiquity of a family that "came over with the Conqueror," or by that of the stately cathedrals of our land—the oldest of which dates back but a thousand years—while the age of the catacombs at Rome, or the pyramids of Egypt, is positively over-

whelming. Can we then realise that both the organ and the harp are older than either of these, and yet as full of vigour to-day as ever? Why, the pianoforte, like the locomotive steam engine, is a mere *parvenu*, with a history dating back, at most, but little over a century!

It is not our intention in this article to refer further to the King of Instruments, but to confine our remarks to the Harp, which in these days is sometimes aptly termed "the Queen instrument of the Salon."

We have already referred to history in connection with the harp, and, paradoxical as it may seem, it is not an exaggeration to say that, without the harp, much of history would have had for us no existence at all. It is not easy for us—amply provided as we are with our libraries and newspapers—to realise that our ancestors were largely dependent for supplies of news, either current or past, upon itinerant musicians, who roamed the land discoursing in song, accompanied by their harps, events of interest to their listeners. Of this character were the troubadours of Italy and the South of France, who flourished in the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, and the bards and minstrels in our own islands. How much of the popularity of the Crusades is due to the enthusiasm inspired by the ballads of the troubadours we may never know; but we can well imagine that deeds of valour and romance in such an age were never lacking wherewith "to point a moral or adorn a tale." This, however, we do know, viz.: that so richly did the Counts of Provence recompense the poets of their country, and so munificent were their gifts to the troubadours, that they ultimately impoverished themselves. There is a beautiful legend, much better known than the authenticated facts, which tells of a minstrel named Blondel, who had been attached to the person of our own



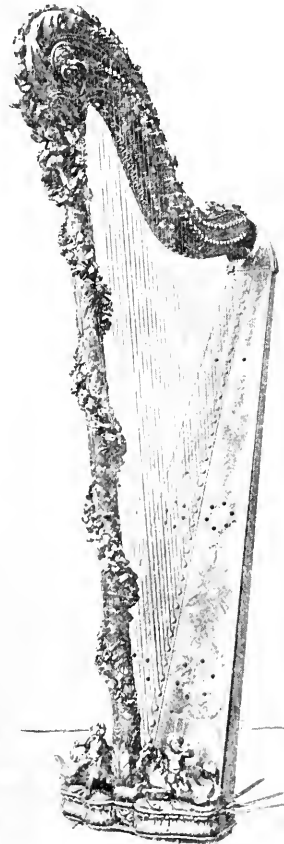
AN IRISH HARP.  
*By Egan, of Dublin. With thumb "pedals."*

King Richard I., and whose love for his master induced him to travel through Germany for the purpose of discovering the place of his confinement. Whenever he came to a castle the minstrel placed himself under the walls, and sang a song which had been a favourite with Cœur-de-Lion. One day, while the king was whiling away the dreary hours in solitude, he heard the sound of a harp beneath his window, and, when the well-known strains floated up to his ears, he joined in the air, and sang the concluding verse. Blondel immediately recognised the voice, and thus the place of Cœur-de-Lion's imprisonment became known to his countrymen.

That the profession of bard existed from an early period in our country is evident from the fact that the venerable Bede tells us that as early as the seventh century it was customary (when the professional harper, whose business it was to amuse the company, was absent) to hand the harp at convivial meetings to each guest in turn, to play upon and to sing a song to its music. In this connection we recall that one of our early Saxon kings—Alfred the Great—in the guise of a bard, entered his

enemy's camp, and by his skill on the harp not only charmed the Danish chieftain, Guthrum, but was enabled to elicit thereby important strategical information. That the bards became, at least at one period, a power to be reckoned with, is evident when we remember that our King Edward I. found it necessary to order their extirpation.

Of a similar vocation to that of the bards and troubadours was undoubtedly that of the lyric poets of ancient Greece; the very description, "lyric," being suggestive of the lyre (a kindred instrument to the harp) for accompaniment on which their poems were composed. Of what sort the music was, performed by these last named, we may know some day, seeing that but a few weeks ago discovery was made in an ancient tomb in their land of one of these poems set to musical notation. It may well be, however, that the strains would not be such as would accord readily with our Western ideas of harmony or melody;



LOUIS XVI. HARP.  
*Formerly belonging to Queen Marie Antoinette. By Erard.*

especially if we may form an opinion from the character of the music prevailing at the present day in the East, where things are but little changed from what they were centuries ago. As an illustration of this, it was said on the occasion of the present Shah of Persia's first visit to London, some twenty years ago, that the strains which most delighted him at the opera were those produced by the musicians in tuning their instruments before the commencement of the performance!

It is however, believed by many high authorities that the ancient Hebrews were more advanced in musical matters than any other Eastern nation: although in reality we do not possess, even in their case, sufficient data to enable us to form a definite opinion. At all events it is beyond dispute that of all ancient harps, those used by the Hebrews were the largest and most like the modern instrument in appearance, having what was, and still is unusual in Eastern harps, a front pillar.

Before taking leave of the subject of ancient

harps, we should mention that "the harp would appear to have been the most important of Egyptian instruments, and indissolubly connected with the rise and decadence of Egyptian civilisation. This latter connection is so striking, that the

shapes, number of strings, and methods of playing the instrument will indicate the most important periods of Egyptian history. Their most ancient harps are supposed to have been bow-shaped, with one string, while the most perfect Egyptian harp had 26 strings, and was most probably played only by priests and kings; accounting perhaps for its elaborate ornamentation."

Emil Nau-  
mann, in his  
"History of  
Music," pub-  
lished by Mes-  
srs. Cassell and  
Co., from which  
we have quoted  
the foregoing  
description of  
the Egyptian  
harp, goes on  
to describe



HARP IN THE LOUIS XVI. STYLE.  
*Made by Messrs. Erard for the Chicago Exhibition*

what the nature of this elaborate ornamentation was. He tells us that "the framework was carved in the richest and most elegant manner, inlaid with gold, ivory, tortoise-shell, and mother of pearl, and ornamented with mythical figures, or with heads

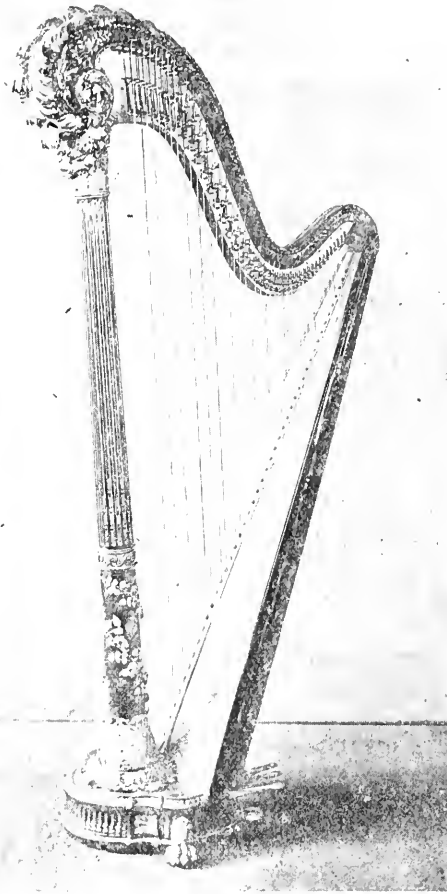
of gods, goddesses, sphinxes, and animals. Decorated, too, sometimes with colours, the edges covered with morocco and velvet, imparting to the instrument a bright and cheerful appearance: such harps probably served as precious pieces of furniture in the houses of Egyptian grandees."

Of the frequent allusion to the harp in the Bible, it is sufficient here to recall one only; that in which the instrument was used by David to soothe the troubled mind of the Israelitish king. The circumstances are thus set forth in a poem, considered to be one of the greatest curiosities of our literature, which was written by the poet, Christopher Smart, the contemporary of Dr. Johnson, with a key upon the wainscot of the apartment in which he was confined, during the temporary aberration of his intellect!

"Blest was the tenderness he felt,  
When to his graceful harp he knelt,  
And did for audience call;  
When Satan with his hand he quelled,  
And in serene suspense he held  
The frantic throes of Saul.

His furious foes no more maligned,  
As he such melody divined,  
And sense and soul detained;  
Now striking strong, now soothing soft,  
He sent the godly sounds aloft,  
Or in delight refrained."

The space at our disposal does not enable us to enter more fully into the early history and description of this delightful instrument, and of those who used it; and we think we cannot close this article better than by giving a few extracts from a leaflet issued by Messrs. S. and P. Erard, to whom



A LOUIS XV. HARP.  
*Shown by Messrs. Erard at the Chicago Exhibition.*

are due all the improvements which have placed the harp in the first rank of modern musical instruments. We take the opportunity here of mentioning that it is to Messrs. Erard that we are indebted for the illustrations which accompany this article.

"Before indicating the nature of the changes, we should mention that the modern harp is of larger dimensions than those used in ancient times, which were—like the Irish harp, familiar, at least heraldically, to us—usually small enough to be held on the knees while being played. The large harp originated among the northern nations of Europe, and thence spread to every part of the civilized world. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the harp was most extensively

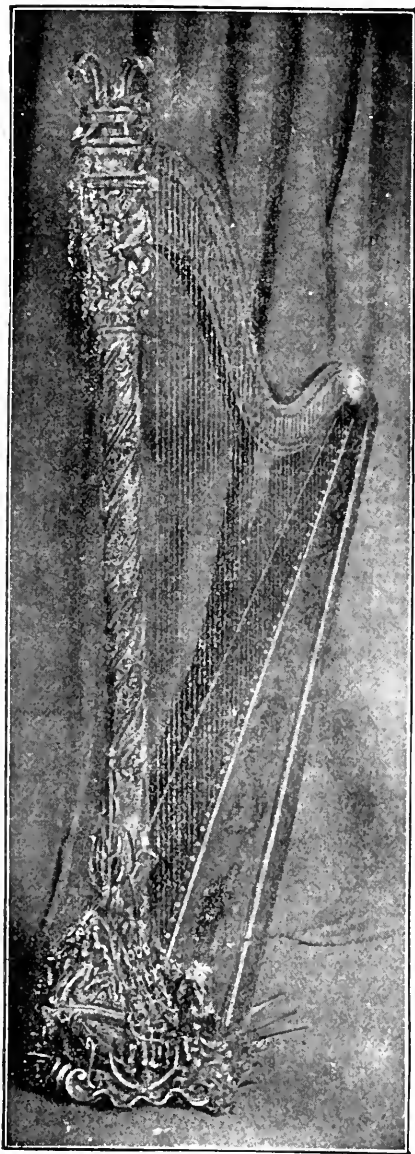
used; and, probably because its own graceful shape lent itself readily to augment the graces of its fair performers, it became most fashionable throughout Europe, and especially in England and France. The harp of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries was, at best, but a very imperfect instrument, and even those—elaborate as works of art—made by Naderman and by Cousineau early last century, had mechanism of the most primitive order.

It may be truly said that until Sebastian Erard arose, the harp was not a musical instrument at all, but only a pretty toy.

Induced, about 1786, by the solicitations of the celebrated harpist, Krumpholtz, to turn his attention to remedying the very imperfect mechanism of the harp, Sebastian Erard produced what is known as his single-action harp. A disagreement with Krumpholtz, however, discouraged Erard from



proceeding further ; until later on, during his exile in England, he again took up the matter, with the glorious result that in 1810 he patented his double-

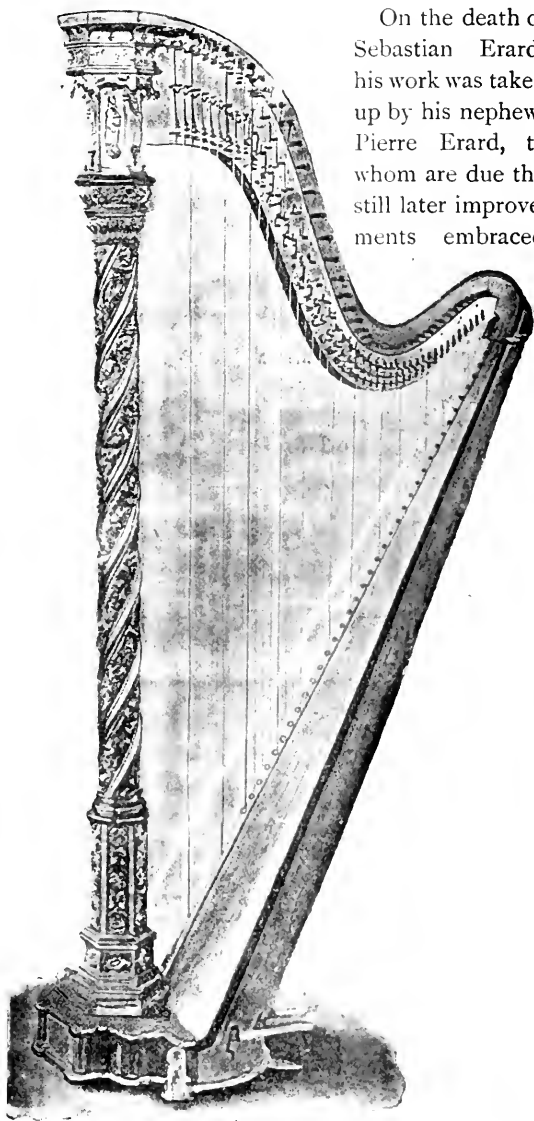


HARP MADE FOR THE PRINCE OF WALES  
BY MESSRS. ERARD.

action harp, by which each string on the harp is made capable of producing three sounds, viz. : the natural, and the semi-tone above and below it. The harp, then, for the first time was fitted to enter the lists with any other musical instrument, and to render—like the pianoforte—any piece of music without any restriction as to the key in which it is written.

All this was accomplished without materially changing the external characteristics of the harp, while revolutionising its internal mechanism, by Sebastian Erard ; and it is needless to add that it was only a question of a short time before all the makers of harps on the old system, finding their occupation gone, left Erard in sole possession of the field.

On the death of Sebastian Erard, his work was taken up by his nephew, Pierre Erard, to whom are due the still later improvements embraced



A "GOTHIC" HARP.  
Made by Messrs. Erard for the Chicago Exhibition.

in the Gothic harp (introduced in 1837) such as were afforded by a greater space between the strings and a broader sounding-board, than the Grecian harp—its immediate predecessor—afforded."



Troubadours, bards, and minstrels of the type of those described above, have long since disappeared from among us; but the harp, which was to them as part of their being, is with us still, albeit "improved out of all knowledge," and has inspired such composers as Parish Alvars, Bochsá,

Dizi, Godefroí, Hasselmans, Labarre, Liszt, Mendelssohn, Oberthür, John Thomas, Wagner, and others, to create such a *répertoire* for the instrument as, but for the invention of the double-action harp, would in all probability never have been produced.



## TO THE IDEAL.

"O toi ! ô Idéal, toi seul existes."—VICTOR HUGO.

THOU shalt live, when lost and dying  
Fades the beauty we have known;  
Thou shalt last, when love is lying  
Cold and murdered by her own.

Thou alone, unchanged, retrieving,  
Shalt survive the final death;  
All as phantoms pass thee, leaving  
Virtue only in thy breath.

Love, or faith, or trust forsaken,  
Drains the cup of agony,  
Prays for sleep no hope shall waken,  
Turning from the stars to die.

All the rest is unavailing,  
Doubt and ruin, travail sore,  
By thy loveliness prevailing  
Hold us thine for evermore.

A. R. WILLIAMS.

## OUR FIRST PUBLISHER.

BY MRS. COOKE.

DOLLY and I made up our minds to write and publish a book. She was nineteen, and I a year older. It was a splendid idea, we thought. We worked at it late and early—so late that our mother complained sadly that we wasted the lamp oil; so early that the housemaid said she couldn't get the rooms dusted while we were in the way. But we sat writing, happily oblivious of all complaints.

We were very sanguine—people always are, when first they start on a literary career. We saw no difficulties ahead: of course any publisher would be glad to accept *our* story, and our only doubt was as to which of them we should honour with our custom.

Our home was a quiet London suburb, and our experience *nil*. We had always lived the quietest of lives; "the world forgetting, by the world forgot." Our mother was a widow, and we were rich only in an infinity of small sisters: we did not entertain, though we lived comfortably. Dolly and I, however, liked pretty dresses, so the publishers' money was a consideration too. As I said, we were sanguine, and yet difficulties beset us from the very outset. Brothers, cousins, male relations or friends we had none; we might have been in a convent, for the only young men we ever saw were the one or two curates whom we occasionally—very occasionally—met at lawn-tennis parties. We had not the least idea how to introduce them naturally, or how to make them talk; sometimes we almost decided to leave them out altogether; and yet, we thought, a novel cannot treat exclusively of females. In our childish days, when we had all played at being "grown up," in the old schoolroom, our husbands were always either shooting in the Highlands or fighting in India. Now, however, the male element could not be so conveniently disposed of. Had we consulted certain authors, we might have filled up the hiatus with rose-scented baths, silken dressing-gowns, and perfumed notes; but we were not allowed to read those authors, and I doubt whether, even if we had, these gentlemen would have appealed to us. We racked our brains for some time in vain. At last Dolly, whom nothing

daunted, hit upon a plan. "They shall always say, 'By Jove!'" she cried. "I know that's what they do—and ask each other whether they couldn't fancy a brandy-and-soda."

So that was settled. For the rest, we worked on a plan of our own. Dolly was to supply the humour and the love, and I the reflective and descriptive passages—to wit, the moralizing. Of course we imagined ourselves to be more or less gifted: *cela va sans dire*. From an early age we had written plays and stories, and I am thankful to say that none of these had ever seen the light, but were hoarded away, a neat little pile, in our most secret drawer upstairs. They had so far served, however, in that they had already largely called my moralizing vein into action. Dolly had a light and happy turn for narrative; I revered her as a genius of the first water, and she as kindly returned the compliment. We never quarrelled; our trifling differences always passed off before reaching boiling point. Our sisters respected our confidences, and on long summer walks, Dolly and I, always far ahead, discoursed of our literary plans, and already, in the golden dream common to young and untried authoresses, thought ourselves famous.

The joint plan of authorship answered very well, although, on re-reading our MS. we found that we had not started with a clear idea of our heroine's eyes: they were black, grey, and blue, in one and the same chapter, and the pet dog, too, had so many different names as to be often past recognition. But these were small matters; on the whole, we toiled at the immortal work so harmoniously that to this day I don't know which parts Dolly wrote and which I wrote. We bought up all the paper the little shop in our suburb afforded; wrote carefully on one side only, and drew red lines down very wide margins. It was surely enough to melt the heart of any publisher, adamant as their species generally are. When it came to thinking of publishing, we acted in this manner: we were determined, at least at first, not to be too ambitious; so we looked out the publisher of the silliest child's book in our little sisters' nursery. "Surely," we said to each other,

"if they publish this they will hardly refuse *ours*."

Then it was tied up, addressed, and taken to the post office. "Shall I register it?" Dolly asked, fondly hugging the bulky parcel, her curls all astray with excitement. "Yes, you had better register it," said I, disregarding, for once, the outlay of twopence. It was in such a good cause!

A month elapsed—we hardly ate, or slept, or thought of anything but our book. "Our child," the romantic Dolly called it. Oh! would it ever be born? The postman's knock struck terror to our hearts. All our assurance had deserted us. What if it should be rejected! It was quite a relief when the daily posts were all over, and our MS. not yet returned. Starving authors in their garrets were not more anxious than we.

At last, one auspicious morning, about a month after we had entrusted our beloved "child" to the post, an answer came. *There* was the name of the firm on the outside of the envelope! We had to summon up all our courage to open it! Perhaps it was a refusal! Dolly had put in too many "By Joves!"

No, it was encouraging in its tone, carefully worded so as to beguile the unwary young author with a little judicious flattery. They called our story "original, charming, and clever"—according to them it had "a delightful freshness"—but, charming as it was, etc., etc., they doubted whether they could incur the whole risk of publishing; would we pay half—only £60!

*Original*—of course our story was original! Were we not guiltless of *any* experiences—either of the world, or of novels? Our talent was recognized! We were to appear in print! We fell on each others' necks and cried for joy. In our first delight we forgot the £60. But that was a mere nothing!—besides, *of course*, the book would sell, and we should not really lose the money. We settled to tell mother now: she would provide the money.

So we ran to find her, and in our excitement we forgot her poverty, her darned gloves, her small savings so carefully treasured against the evil day; or rather, so sure were we of winning glory and fame that we thought of the £60 as a safe investment only.

We spread the publisher's letter before her astonished eyes.

"We have written a story, and it's to be printed!" I cried.

"Yes, and it's charming, clever, and original!" shouted Dolly, quoting from the precious letter.

Mother put on her spectacles. She was some time taking it all in. When she did, she was perhaps more puzzled than charmed. She knew as little of the world as we did, but, like George Eliot's "Tessa," she was always inclined to overrate the cleverness of her children. So she quite believed all that the letter said on that score.

"Well, my darlings, I'm not sure that it's wise," she said, "but I won't stand in your way. There's that money invested in Consols—it's just about £60, and you can have that."

"Then it's settled," we cried joyfully, and left mother to her patching—poor mother—while we sat down to compose a dignified letter to the publisher. Our joy must be restrained, we felt, and we tried to write as though such matters were of everyday occurrence with us. In a short time an answer came, not in quite such flattering terms, but still sufficiently so to tickle our vanity. Could we appoint a day to come and see the head of the firm?

So, one fine July morning, Dolly and I, feeling very small and unprotected, came up to London by ourselves. We had dressed ourselves carefully in our most sober garb, so as to look as old as possible, and at last we threaded our way satisfactorily through the labyrinths of St. Paul's Churchyard, after being wrongly-directed by several small boys, I suspect "for a lark." We trembled as we rang the bell. It was worse, much worse, than going to the dentist. Pale with fear, our hearts thumping loudly, we climbed the fateful staircase. (Even in my terror I did not omit to notice its extreme dirt).

"Don't look as if you were so frightened," said Dolly to me, irritably, herself as nervous as possible.

"I can't help it," said I, my teeth chattering.

We were shewn into a little dingy room, where, behind a big table, sat the publisher himself. If this was the senior partner of the firm, the firm must have been decidedly young. This young man looked no more than six-and-twenty; he had a pleasant look, and a humorous twinkle in his eye, but like his office, he was dusty.

Dolly and I went straight to the point: "We

have come up, if you please," said I, after an unseen nudge from her, "about our book, 'A Village Romance.'"

"Ah, yes, I remember," said the publisher. But he said it rather doubtfully, as if, somehow, he didn't after all think very much of it. This seemed curious, since he had written of its merits in such glowing terms.

"Did you think that love scene—between Lionel and Minnie—in the garden—should be left out?" asked Dolly, timorously, for she had her doubts on that point.

The publisher leaned back and tilted his chair. He didn't seem to remember much about the love-scene. "Well," he said, regaining his equilibrium with a jerk, and fingering our precious MS., which was lying, we then saw, on the table, "I have made one or two notes here and there, of things which might be omitted. This for instance:" and he read aloud one of poor Dolly's funniest bits. She blushed, and I felt for her.

"It amused our friends," said I, plucking up courage, for mother had laughed till she cried over it, and our little sisters thought it "splendid."

"Ah, friends, perhaps," the young man went on mercilessly, "but do you think it would amuse the public?"

We were crushed at once.

But the publisher was not unkind. On the whole he pitied our evident confusion, and let us off easily. After all, he was human; and then he was sure of our sixty pounds.

We had duly to sign an agreement, and on descending the rickety staircase at the close of the interview, I breathed a loud sigh of relief.

So our book was printed. What pride was ours when we received the first proof sheets! With what importance we sat correcting them! We made little marginal notes with great satisfaction to ourselves, but of which the printers didn't take as much notice as they ought. Our sketches—the book had illustrations too—were often sent back, the publisher remarking, "this might be a little improved," or, "that must be more correctly drawn." These were slight rebuffs; but then we were sustained happily by unlimited faith in the book and in each other.

And then, what excitement, what pleasure, when the first copies arrived, resplendent in their gay covers! The whole household was upset. Not

one of us could eat any dinner, on that important day. Mother was pale, and our little sisters were wild with delight. We dreamed of a well-earned fame, and Dolly even began to settle how she should sign her name for the work entitled "Eminent Women of the Nineteenth Century."

Alas! from that day our trials began. Happy, after all, is he who is unknown to fame! To begin with, the sixty pounds had to be immediately paid. This sum seemed bigger to us now than at first; and the payment came at an awkward time, just when we were particularly "tight," and these little savings would have helped us comfortably. Dolly and I ate bread and water for many days, and went about in threadbare garments—but of what use was that, when so large a sum was wanting? Mother did not complain; on the contrary, she paid the sum without one word of reproach, or even telling a soul, which made us feel more like felons than ever, robbers of the widow and the orphan. Only the sweet hope of getting our money back, and more besides, sustained us. Ah! we were callow enough at that time!

And, curiously enough, when the great secret was divulged, our friends did not welcome the book as they might have done. They were from the first very sparing of their praise; and after a time we noticed that they even carefully avoided the subject, or looked confused when our mother, in the innocence of her heart, expatiated upon it. We were too young yet to have learned what every wise man and woman knows, namely, that friends are always the most severe of critics, and we gave ourselves much needless trouble to find out the reason of their behaviour. The only thing they did in connection with the book, was to send the most unkind reviews, carefully clipped out, for our edification. The reviews, by the way, were not at all cruel; indeed, on looking back, I find that they were much kinder than we had any right to expect; but one day Dolly ran in with a flush of anger on her pretty face (she was pretty, by-the-bye), and the beginning of a tear twinkling in her eyes:—

"Look, Mattie," she cried, brandishing a newspaper, "how utterly unfounded! They say, 'the authoress evidently knows as little of grammar as she does of the ways of polite society.' Why, I made Miranda talk slang *on purpose*! She was *intended* to be careless and ungrammatical."

"Yes," I said, "and here's another, saying 'the

perspective of the street on page 50 is so farcical that the artist must evidently have sketched it late at night, after a champagne supper!"

Dolly laid her curly head on the table and wept so bitterly, that the unkind critic, if he had seen her, would have suffered remorse for the rest of his life.

These, however, were our bad moments; and we had some nice reviews too, which mother wanted to frame for the drawing-room. Sometimes the critics disagreed; for instance, we were puzzled by reading in one paper, that "this charming book would have been improved by the omission of the illustrations," and in another, that "the admirable drawings would have been better without the letter-press." But we got used to all these things in time.

Meanwhile, by dint of much inward worry, we both became thin and jaded. Dolly's cheeks grew pale, and she looked as worn as though she had come through a seven years' engagement. We were alternately cast down to the depths of depression—and lay awake at night thinking what we could pawn—or we were raised to a pinnacle of delirious joy by some favourable notice of our "child." Sometimes we thought it a work of the highest genius, and sometimes we concluded that we must have been mad to publish such stuff. Our mother varied too. She was swayed by the last comments she had heard; and these, as before

remarked, being generally adverse, she began to think she had perhaps rated her children's powers too highly. She never said so, but we could see it, and we accordingly fell yet lower in our own estimation.

And then the book did not sell! It was months before we dare write and enquire of our publishers how it had fared; weeks before we received a reply to our enquiry. Then it turned out that 499 copies of the immortal work had been sold; and as we were to get nothing until 500 had been sold, there was accordingly nothing due to us!

(The remainder of the edition of 1,000, I may here state, never did go off, and, some years after, was sold as a "remainder.")

But the sixty pounds! Years passed, before, by rigid economy, we saved that sum. Dolly and I, the delinquents, during that time never bought a yard of ribbon, or a pair of gloves with an easy conscience. The memory of the book weighed on us with nightmare-like persistency. We no longer thought ourselves geniuses. We consoled ourselves, it is true, by reflecting how much practice we had had in style and in writing "the Queen's English"; but I am afraid that altogether, Dolly and I, to say nothing of our family, did not derive unmixed satisfaction from the patronage of Our First Publisher.





THE TOWERS OF TOWER FALLS.

# WONDERLAND.

BY PERCIVAL RIVERS.



FOLLOWING the course of the Yellowstone River, we come at last into the land of the Cyclops: for with no other race of beings does it seem possible to associate the colossal monuments that confront us in every direction.

Certainly, had any

Phœnician craft ever carried him so far from his native Chios, Homer might, with greater propriety, have assigned to Polyphemus and his brethren as their abode this region of prodigious grandeur than the beautiful island of Sicily that pastured their flocks. The author of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, had he ever traversed this part of the world, would have owned that no jewel-bestrewn valley, into which he ever sent that obliging bird, the roc, rivalled in marvellous splendour the gorge through which we are about to pass. We wonder no longer that Cortes found it necessary to meet the incredulity of his countrymen by putting into their hands, and setting before their eyes, those evidences of a civilization which he knew could never be described, or, if described, would fail to gain credence. Nor need we be surprised that artists have despaired of reproducing in any adequate degree formations more fantastic, and colours more brilliant, than ever figured on the canvas of even a Turner. Thus, in natural phenomena, as in human experience, the adage holds good, that "truth is stranger than fiction."

The old mountaineers who first explored the Yellowstone country seem to have been deeply impressed by the unique character of its scenes: but being better acquainted with Christian doctrine than Pagan mythology, they have ascribed to Satanic agency most of those grotesque formations which must strike even a superficial observer with astonishment. And peculiarly apt are the names they have given to these, as succeeding travellers have averred.

We have diverged from the Yellowstone River, however, which has not yet accomplished that crowning feat, of which intimation is given us long before we approach the scene, in a deafening roar like that of thunder, at the sound of which we quicken our pace. The fascination that lurks in a mighty cataract has been often remarked but never explained. That there is something infectious in the wild tumultuous glee of those giddy eddies that ere long concentrate their force in one wild leap over the precipice down into the seething abyss, has been proved by the experience of many, who have felt an almost irresistible inclination to throw themselves upon the rushing current that seems impatient to reach some glorious goal.

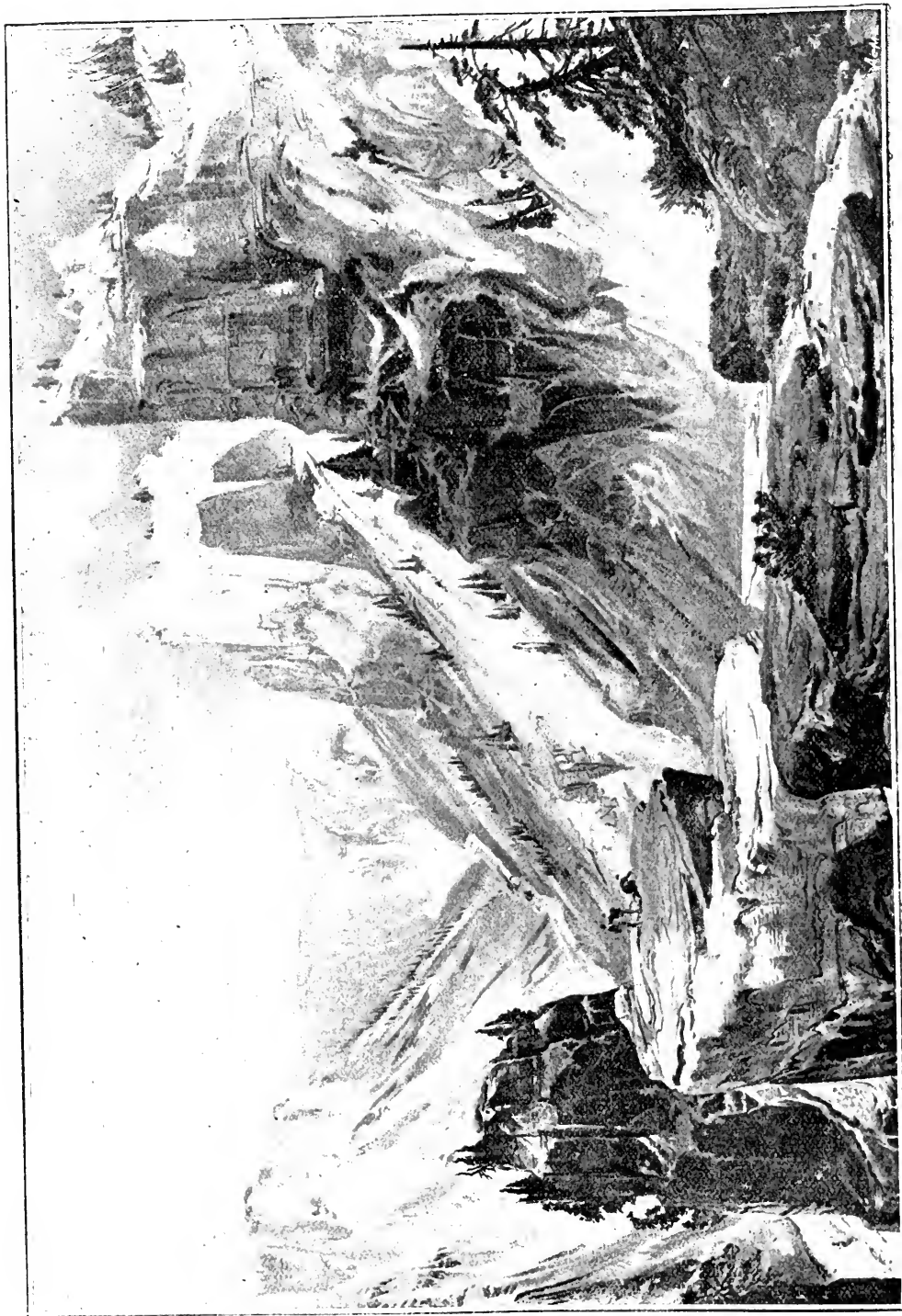
Here the scene is one to which all the surrounding features lend enchantment. Two gigantic pillars stand at the edge of the fall, rising one hundred feet above the foaming waters. Between them dashes the river, which, in one immense volume, sweeps over the precipice, falling to a depth of nearly four hundred feet. Here and there in its descent a projecting rock is struck, and the water is resolved into a shower of diamonds; then, the bottom reached, the volume breaks into a cloud of ascending spray that forms a transparent veil through which gleam the varied tints of the sides of the ravine.

To the adventurous, the towers, which give their name to the falls, will offer a tempting coign of vantage from which to view this imposing spectacle, and the prospect from the summit of one of them well repays the dangerous climb; but only those of strong nerves should attempt it, for a single false step here is fatal.

In the accompanying illustration, which but poorly indicates the transcendent beauty of the scene, an attempt is made to reproduce the effect of sunrise, the rosy light of the sky contrasting sharply with the dark colours of the pillars and the waters at their base.

Recovering itself after its mad leap, the river flows on through what is called the Grand Cañon, a deep gorge extending to a distance of about thirty miles, and remarkable not only for its depth





GRAND CANYON OF YELLOWSTONE.



but for the brilliant colouring of its sides. And here again we must reiterate the statement, that nowhere else in the world is to be found so signal a display of those vivid hues of which nature, as a rule, is somewhat sparing. The prevailing tint is white, but the reds, yellows, browns, purples, and greens, blending into each other, show a greater variety of colour than any artist ever ventured to put upon canvas. Indeed, one cannot even conceive of the luxuriance of colour until he has visited the spot and verified the description given of it by others.

Hardly less striking are the fantastic shapes presented by the walls of this ravine. Like the ruins of Cyclopiian structures are the strange, fortress-like masses that line their summits in many places, sometimes taking the form of towers, spires, or columns, which it is easy to imagine as the fragments of gigantic castles reared by Vulcan's aid. Indeed, the agency of the fire-god is everywhere in evidence, and the few pines that fringe the margin of the gulf seem to shrink like trespassers on an alien soil.

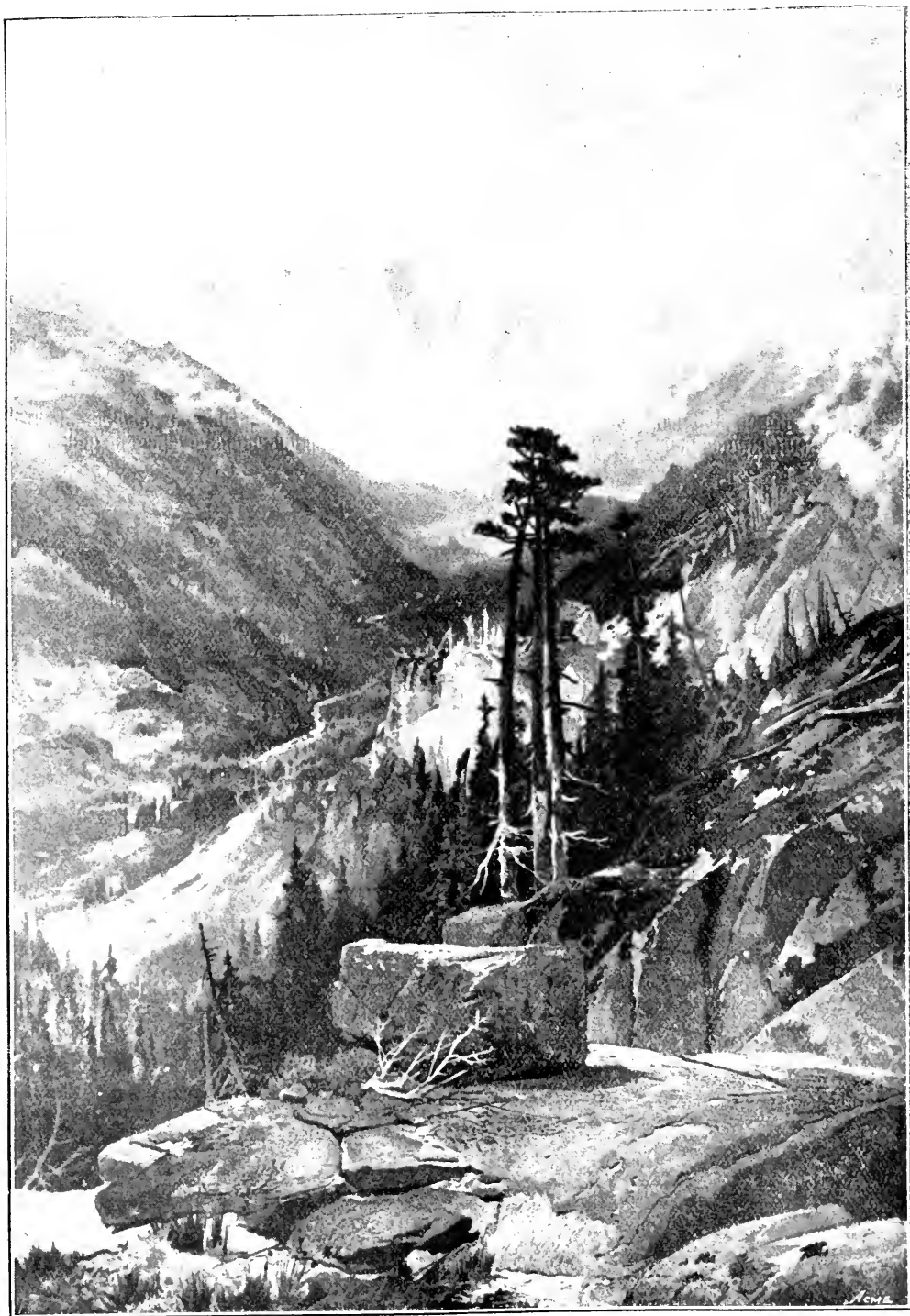
After a toilsome descent of an hour and a quarter, the bottom of the gorge is reached. There the stern grandeur of the scene is best realised, and that sense of danger inspired by the silence and solitude that pervade the precincts of the sublime, weighs oppressively on the spirits. Towering above us on either side are those castle-crowned walls that threaten every instant to engulf us, shutting out the glad sunshine whose radiance glints on their lofty ridges. At our feet flows the sombre river, whose waves alone break the awful stillness brooding over the place. No movement of any living thing relieves its desolate loneliness, save the circling flight of a few hawks disturbed by us in our descent. We are glad to forsake so gloomy a region and seek again the upper world, where light and life and the happiness born of activity will be doubly welcome after even so brief a sojourn in the realms of Melancholy. As the law of contrast imparts to life its greatest zest, so, too, in travel, the mountain heights seem all the more inviting after the seclusion of the lowly valleys, and although a long journey lies before us, the glorious prospect of snow-capped peaks is enough to fortify us against fatigue.

Accustomed as we have been to the colossal dimensions of this public park, it will not surprise

us to find that its walls are ranges of mountains and, turning our faces towards the western boundary, we come at last to three groups, extending to a distance of about a hundred miles, and comprising from fifty to seventy-five peaks, which reach an elevation of over fourteen thousand feet. From the summit of any of these the view is grand beyond description. We seem to stand amid a sea of mountains, crest lifting above crest as when first the mighty fire-storm swept them upwards on its molten flood. Sentinels on earth's loftiest battlements, these imperious crests still rear themselves proudly to the sky, each in cold solitary grandeur, disdaining even nature's green mantle for heaven's pure robe of snow.

Of all those mountain peaks, however, none possesses so unique an interest as that which has been so fittingly named the Mountain of the Holy Cross. The nomenclature which everywhere in the New World marks the progress of the early Spanish invaders, seems to warrant the assumption that this title was bestowed by some enthusiastic soldier of Castile. One can imagine the joy that must have filled the exile's heart as he thus beheld the symbol of his faith displayed on the rocky side of that high mountain—the snowy cross uplifted before his wondering eyes in everlasting token of the great Expiation made for a world's guilt.

This wonderful object is produced by snow lying in two intersecting seams of granite, that which forms the upright beam of the cross being about fifteen hundred feet in length, while the horizontal arm averages about seven hundred, varying with the season. The face of the mountain for about three thousand feet is so nearly vertical that no snow can lie on it; hence the white cross remains visible throughout the whole year, forming a conspicuous landmark, which can be seen by the naked eye at a distance of eighty to a hundred miles. It was said that Athene's spear and helmet, glittering on the Acropolis, formed a beacon for Athenian mariners returning to their native city; but no sheen of brass meets the eye of the sailor who voyages through these waters to-day; and the Pantheon, of which Pallas was one of the principal ornaments, is now but a forsaken ruin, like the religion that peopled it with deities. As long, however, as the mountain itself endures, the white cross which nature's sure



THE MOUNTAIN OF THE HOLY CROSS.

hand has engraven on this mountain's side shall remain a silent but eloquent reminder of the world's redemption.

The valley through which the Mountain of the Holy Cross is approached was once the bed of a glacier, and traces of the ice are visible for a distance of two thousand feet or more on its scarred sides. There, too, abound what the French call "*roches moutonnes*" or sheep-backed rocks. Seen at a distance they are easily mistaken for a flock of recumbent sheep. They do not rise, however, as we advance, but, on the contrary, dispute our way, and, being from ten to fifty feet in height, prove formidable barriers, the more so as the interstices between them are filled with fallen pines, which render it impossible to approach on horseback within five miles of the base of the mountain. And few would care to undertake the expedition on foot.

And yet what region is there so inaccessible that the foot of man will not venture to tread it, if only it be sprinkled with a little gold-dust? Standing amid these sublime mountain summits, one would hardly think it possible that human rapacity had ever tempted man to brave the perils of these solitudes. Nevertheless, paths have been traced from peak to peak by miners on their way to the gold and silver mines of Colorado, in the vicinity of which is located the view represented in the accompanying illustration. Some of these trails conduct the traveller over ridges eleven thousand five hundred feet high, and into the region of perpetual snow—a cold enough temperature, one would imagine, to arrest the gold-fever, if anything could arrest it. Yet its victims press on, undaunted by obstacles and dangers, and lured by a gleam as fallacious as that of "The Great Car-buncle," the pursuit of which forms the subject of one of Hawthorne's pregnant tales.

We will not follow them, however, for the wonders of the Yellowstone Park are not yet exhausted, and all that we have yet seen but whets our appetite for more. The only danger is that, having tarried so long in wonderland, we may become so habituated to its marvels as to lose the delight they first inspired. In such a case we have but to fancy ourselves once more plodding our monotonous round in the prosaic city to greet with new relish these scenes of romance and poetry and beauty eternal.

And stolid indeed must be the mind that could remain unresponsive to influences so sublime as everywhere here prevail. We have heard, it is true, of individuals who objected to mountains because *they intercepted the view*: and probably for such the Sahara desert would offer greater attractions than all the grandest prospects in nature, but, however incapable of appreciating the sublime, few could fail to be struck by the *unique* character of the scenery of the Yellowstone Park. One could almost imagine that nature had selected this region for the display of her wildest caprice, so extraordinary are the formations that meet the astonished eye, so gorgeous and fantastic the colours lavished upon them. Indeed, this very feature constitutes the chief difficulty in giving even an approximate idea by pen or brush of this realm of wonder, which, to be believed in, must be seen. And it is one of the compensations afforded by the railway for lost leisure and tranquillity, that to thousands who otherwise would never have even heard of their existence, such places are now accessible. We wonder how many of those who crossed the Atlantic to loiter amid the glittering show at Chicago were aware what an infinitely worthier spectacle lay within reach—a spectacle as far transcending the World's Fair as nature transcends art; one, too, whose memory must be a life-long treasure. Probably those whose mental horizon is limited by city walls would, if they chanced to hear of the Yellowstone National Park, refer it to the category of other parks they had seen, and feel no inclination to quit the pleasure, bustle and excitement of an Exhibition for the tame delights of well-trimmed lawns and showy parterres. Those, however, who made the journey would find in store for them such marvels and beauties as never yet were seen in any building reared by human hands. Amid the scenery of Switzerland or Norway the mind feels almost overwhelmed with a sense of awe; brought, as it were, face to face with the sublime; but here it is wonder, astonishment, sometimes even mirthful surprise, that are demanded by the wholly exceptional phenomena around us. Leaving out of account altogether the geysers, with those fairy-like structures, which it has taken unnumbered ages to rear around them, the hot springs in their gem-encrusted basins, and that wonderful chasm already described, whose walls,



THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS, COLORADO.

three thousand feet high, are crowned with Titanic ruins, and stained with the hues of the rainbow, the rivers, lakes, mountains, and valleys, revealed to our view by every walk through this vast pleasure-ground, possess, one and all, peculiarities that differentiate them from all others. No doubt they owe much of their charm to the clearness of the atmosphere which prevails in these high latitudes; but, like all real beauty, theirs, while it may be enhanced by, is nevertheless independent of, external influences, and must, at all times, challenge the admiration of the beholder.

Whether any of the families of the human race ever inhabited this region is a question which ethnologists may settle to their own satisfaction; but that the Yellowstone Park was at one time a vast zoological garden has been proved by the discovery of the remains of many extinct animals, which long ago roamed over its wide area in the enjoyment of a freedom that is gradually being encroached on by the ever-extending sway of civilization. Whatever the conditions of their existence,

they did well to withdraw from the world before the age of steam, for, remembering the career and tragic end of the too popular Jumbo, we tremble to think what would be its fate should any unhappy survivor of those cumbrous monsters make its appearance there to-day. Doubtless the announcement of such an event would do more to popularise the Yellowstone Park than all its other attractions combined. The personally-conducted tours, having this for their destination, provided sufficient guarantees were given against physical danger, would probably enlist much larger numbers than ever set out to "do" Switzerland or Norway. Well for the Park, however, and well for all who ever enter its charmed precincts, that no such contingency is at all likely to arise; and we may still anticipate the pleasure of visiting a region where nature has securely entrenched herself against reckless invasion, and where she maintains inviolate the sacred courts of her mountain-girt temple, whereon shall rest, till time itself is no longer, the glory of the great Creator.

## A SPELL.

Go, cast thine obole into Trevi's Fountain,  
 Drink of its waters, and, returning home,  
 Pray that by sea and land, by lake and mountain,  
 All roads at last may lead once more to Rome.—H. MERVALL.

I HAVE dwelt in a City whose beauty  
 Winds a charm around every heart;  
 And I practised an innocent magic  
 Ere I turned me to depart;  
 For I tasted of Trevi's fountain  
 With a smile where a tear had part.

For who drinks, they say, of those waters,  
 And goes to his distant home,  
 However long he may tarry,  
 However far he may roam,  
 Shall see again with his longing eyes  
 The hills and the towers of Rome.

And this evening, you have not missed me  
 As you gazed at the sunset grey,  
 But a spell that you know not had seized me,  
 And had borne me far, far away,  
 And had shown me a scene unforgotten, I ween,  
 Though distant this many a day.

And I have gazed on an amber sky,  
 And against it a purple dome,  
 While the Banksia Rose o'er each garden wall  
 Fell in billows of creamy foam,  
 Filling the air with its fragrance rare,  
 And I knew that I looked on Rome.

And what is the spell that has borne me  
 To the land where I fain would be,  
 That has given once more to my weary eyes  
 The skies that they craved to see?  
 'Tis the Banksia Rose in your bosom, dear,  
 That has brought it all back to me.

JETTA VOGEL.



### III.

## TEACHING AS A PROFESSION FOR WOMEN.

By A SINGER.

IN the present day it is becoming more and more a general custom for women everywhere to earn their own living. For a long time teaching offered almost the only field for woman's work, and it still affords occupation and maintenance to many. There is, however, a marked change in the requirements of the public. It no longer suffices that a would-be governess should possess a smattering of English and French, with an accomplishment or two flung in as extras. A higher level of attainment is demanded of the teacher, which will, in time, receive an equivalent in the improved social status and more liberal remuneration eventually to be commanded by those who are fully qualified.

It is a mere truism to say that women are peculiarly fitted by nature for the office of imparting knowledge. This has long been admitted. Their tact and patience, their adaptability and sympathy, put them speedily in touch with their pupils, while their gifts of fluent and lucid exposition enable them to convey clearly to other minds the information they have themselves acquired.

Unhappily, until within a very recent period,

women were open to the grave charge of inefficiency for lack of thoroughness in their own preparatory training. Now, each year as it passes witnesses a constant progress in this particular. Facilities for study are increased, and the general sense of the community is in favour of a thoroughly sound education, general or special, for girls and boys alike.

The teaching of music in all its branches is work for which women of the cultured classes are peculiarly adapted. Mr. Roeckel, the well-known composer, in a recent paper, read before a meeting of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, pays a high tribute to the efficiency of women as teachers of music. He says that "one of the most noticeable facts in the History of Modern English Education is the immense strides which women have made in the music-teaching department. I do not allude to the elementary, but to all, even to the highest branches of the art. Everywhere do they enter into successful and thoroughly justified competition with men, and even the formerly unassailable prestige of the 'finishing master,' is to-day fully and deservedly

"shared by the 'finishing mistress.' . . . Wherever woman exercises her influence it is surely in furtherance of culture and of polish."

This is especially the case with regard to the kindred subjects of singing and elocution, for on no art does general culture have so direct an effect as on these which involve the use of the voice.

"What shall we do with our sons?" is said to be one of the burning questions of the day, and a distinguished young author asserts that "Send them to grow oranges" is the suggestion usually offered in solution of this difficulty. "What shall we do with our daughters?" is a problem which appears likely in future to engage at least as large a share of parental meditation, for statistics prove that marriage is becoming less general; further, that such marriages as do take place are deferred almost to middle life, and also that the numerical disproportion between the sexes is ever on the increase in this country. It has therefore become a matter of necessity with many women that they should be in a position to maintain themselves by the efficient practice of some profession or art.

It is my present purpose to consider how a woman may become a successful teacher of singing. I do not mean successful merely in the limited and barren sense of making a livelihood (some charlatans contrive to do that), but successful in doing sound and good work, and thus serving her day and generation. I was recently much impressed by some fine thoughts on this subject in an article contributed some time ago to the *New Review* by the late Sir Morell Mackenzie: "What is professional success?" he asks, and then proceeds to answer thus his own question—"It is not merely making a living, still less the accumulation of wealth, though, of course, if a man cannot support himself by his profession he can hardly be said to succeed in it. Real success implies adding to the stock of professional knowledge which has been gathered by his predecessors; it implies raising, or at least maintaining, the credit and influence of his profession; it implies giving the benefit of one's technical skill to the greatest number of persons who stand in need of it; it implies developing one's sphere of usefulness to the utmost extent, and being an efficient part of the machinery of Society, and advancing the welfare of mankind in every direction so far as lies

in one. A man who looks on his profession as nothing better than a means of extracting as much money as he can from his fellow-creatures cannot be said to achieve success, however rich he may become."

We are all aware that there is a considerable amount of truth in the axiom that teachers are born, not made. The possession of knowledge does not by any means confer the ability to impart it. This fact is so self-evident that to many its statement here may appear superfluous. It is not so, however, for there appears to exist a pernicious idea that anyone having the most superficial acquaintance with a subject—especially if that subject be an art—is qualified to teach others; and, in the prevalence of this fallacy lies the solution of a mystery which puzzles many—this, that the musical profession as a whole has not at present any recognised legal social status, such as is accorded to the professions of law, medicine, and divinity. Indeed, while these last named professions may be said to confer a certain social status—in music each individual is simply accorded the place he makes for himself—probably through some accident of birth, or some quality quite apart from his professional merits. At present the untrained, incompetent pretender is frequently ranked quite indiscriminately in the same category as those who have devoted themselves to a conscientious study of their specialty, often at as great an outlay of time and money as would have been expended on the university career of a student of medicine or of law.

The art of teaching should be studied by all who intend to make education their calling. Upon this important topic, Dr. Joseph Ogilvie, principal of the Church of Scotland Training College, and one of a family most distinguished in the scholastic world, recently made some weighty remarks on the occasion of the opening of the education class at King's College, Aberdeen. He observed that "A certain amount of potential energy, so to speak, is stored in the mind at birth; but its liberation depends upon circumstances, and of these the principal is special training. It does sometimes happen that a concomitance of circumstances quite fortuitous, aids the development of faculty. . . .

"We cordially agree that without poetical aptitude we can have no true poet, and without peda-



gic gifts we can have no really good teacher. But it by no means follows that an aptitude will develop of itself."

A thorough preparatory training is even more indispensable to the teacher than to the public performer. The vocalist risks only her own reputation and her own voice in attempting work beyond her powers, but the unskilful teacher may ruin many voices—for, as I have said in an earlier paper, the voice is the most delicate of all instruments, and is easily damaged beyond retrieval. The intending teacher should, therefore, study her art for several years before attempting to impart it, however, not limiting her studies to subjects bearing directly upon voice development and song. A knowledge of literature is essential—because a fine feeling for words, and an intelligent and liberal appreciation of all that is noble in poetry and prose is a necessary part of the musician's equipment. Familiarity with at least one foreign language is desirable. If it be the intention of a professional pupil to teach, she should at once acquaint her instructor with her plans, and then this end will be held in view by the professor in the direction of her studies. Besides striving to acquire skill in the use of her own voice, she should obtain permission to be present during her mistress's lessons to other pupils. Thus she will learn how great a variety of resource and expedient is demanded of those whose work is to develop voices of every description in students of the most diverse mental calibre. Again, while general culture is favourable to success in every calling, to no one is it more vitally essential than to the musician, who is called upon to interpret the thoughts of many minds; for if his own mind be barren and narrow, his performance of great works must inevitably be soulless and mechanical, and this defect will certainly be transmitted to his pupils. After undergoing a thorough training, and selecting a field of labour, the next essential to success is a determination to be courageous in the face of those difficulties which always beset beginnings. We all admit that the first effort is invariably the hard one, and yet some of us, while acknowledging the truth of this time-tried adage, act as though we did not believe it. Many people lose all by their impatience. If success does not immediately crown their earliest endeavours, they give up the struggle in despair, or else they seek another field

of labour, moving from place to place, and giving to none of them a fair trial.

Unless the intending teacher proposes to pursue her calling in her native town, where she will enjoy the advantage of a ready-made local interest, and avoid expense by living in a parent's home, some capital will be required during the first year. A portion of this will be needed to defray the cost of living, and part should be judiciously spent in advertising. Advertising by means of a prospectus is very useful, provided care be taken in the selection of its recipients. In a case known to me, a teacher began work in a strange town, where, knowing but little of the people, she was advised to entrust the addressing and posting of her circulars to the firm that had printed them. She was assured that this firm knew the town thoroughly, and were certain to be most judicious in the execution of this business. As events proved, her worst enemies could not have acted in a manner more prejudicial to her interests. In the first place, owing to negligence, some of the prospectuses were sent off unstamped, and these were returned to her with rude and angry letters from those who thus had to pay double postage. This was not the worst that happened. Only gradually did she learn from one source and another what had been the method adopted in distributing the circulars. Instead of sending out the announcements to heads of families at their private residences, her agents had addressed them without exception to places of business, and then not to the heads of each firm, but almost exclusively to young men, either junior partners, or sons of principals. Fortunately, by the time this blunder was perpetrated, the young teacher had received a number of introductions to leading residents in the town and neighbourhood, whose personal acquaintance with herself and her antecedents served to minimise the harm which such an extraordinary course of procedure was likely to inflict upon her prospects at the very outset of her career. This experience leads me to suggest that prospectuses should be sent out under the direct supervision of the intending teacher, who would find a directory more trustworthy than the indifferent services she might chance to employ. Of course it stands to reason that many firms exist who might execute such work with careful efficiency. This lady must have been exceptionally unfortunate in her choice of agents, but the episode certainly



tends to confirm one's belief in the old saying, "If you would be well served, serve yourself." On the prospectus, every qualification of the would-be teacher should be explicitly set forth. She should state the number of years she has studied, naming her principal teacher. By principal, I mean the teacher under whom she studied for three or more years, it being usual to work thus steadily under one eminent *maestro*, and later to engage in shorter periods of study under other masters, who each excel in some special branch of the vocal art. Any other experience possessed should be also set forth—such as her appearances at any good concerts with *artistes* of repute.

A want of principle is sometimes shown in the advertisements of persons not fully qualified. Announcements are publicly made, and suffered to pass uncontroverted, that the singer has been trained by such and such eminent professors, from whom in reality only a few lessons have been taken. A wrong impression is thus given to the public mind, for it is an understood thing that the name of a teacher shall not be made use of to give prestige, unless a prolonged course of study has been pursued under his or her direction. Prospectuses are not intended to supersede press announcements, but they have their special use in the fact that fuller information can be thus given, and a class of readers reached who would never think of scanning the advertisement column of a daily paper.

At this juncture a friend can be of great service. Many teachers owe not a few of their first pupils to some kindly acquaintance who has judiciously mentioned their acquirements as opportunity offered.

Having advertised through the medium of the daily papers and by means of prospectuses, the next step is to secure an appearance at some good concert—or else to organise one—in the town which is to be the scene of the teacher's future labours. To obtain an engagement at a high-class concert is preferable when the beginner is a stranger in the town of her adoption—to arrange a concert of her own is the better plan when the vocalist is already possessed of a large connection of family friends and supporters. The *artiste's* own singing should be her strongest recommendation—at least until the day comes when it is possible for her to arrange a thoroughly creditable

pupils' concert. It had been my lot to sing a good deal in public during the two years which preceded the time when ill-health compelled me to resign all hopes of continuing my chosen career for the less taxing work of teaching, and I made my first appearance in the town of my adoption at a high-class concert. To obtain such an engagement the singer's former press notices and her own singing should suffice.

Never to refuse work, although it may chance to offer in an unlooked for and uncongenial form, is a golden rule in every calling. In refusing some distasteful engagement, much more than at first sight appears may be sacrificed. As years roll by it is wonderfully instructive to trace to their source all the factors which have contributed to success.

Of course every teacher should at once make some hard and fast rules, to which she should adhere with consistency—such, for example, as a refusal to teach elsewhere than at her own rooms (if she be so minded), or any limitation which her circumstances suggest. I advise the beginner to consider well before she consents to be a visiting teacher, making an exception in favour of a visiting professorship at any good schools and colleges. To teach private pupils at their own homes means much loss of time, besides great fatigue, and has other attendant disadvantages. Of these it may suffice to name the matter of remuneration. To be adequately repaid for the time and labour thus expended would demand a higher scale of fees than any novice, however highly trained, is likely to command.

As I have already observed—and it is a fact which cannot be too forcibly emphasized—the teacher who desires to succeed should be possessed of wide general culture and some knowledge of the world and of human nature. For lack of this knowledge, which only experience bestows, many young teachers whose own course of study is but recently completed, fail to succeed at first. For such, a residential engagement in a college offers the most promising opening. Every pupil is distinguished by characteristics peculiar to her individual temperament, and only experience and liberal culture can furnish the teacher with that sympathy and insight, which is essential to a perception of the reasoning likely to prevail upon each student to co-operate heartily towards her

own progress and advancement. The great point is to awaken the pupil's interest in her work.

The late Sir Morell Mackenzie, in the article from which I have already quoted, speaks some forcible words as to the relation of general culture to professional success. He writes thus: "Culture, which is essentially a familiarity with many minds and their workings, gives a power of sympathetic insight, a delicate perception of the effect of words and facts on different persons, which is hardly ever a natural gift. . . . A man may have a thorough knowledge of his profession and great skill in applying it, but unless he can manage his clients, patients, parishioners, or whatever they may be, he will fail in attaining the highest success. Nothing so fits a man for this delicate duty as culture, which will make him useful and effective, when a man of greater professional learning may be powerless for good."

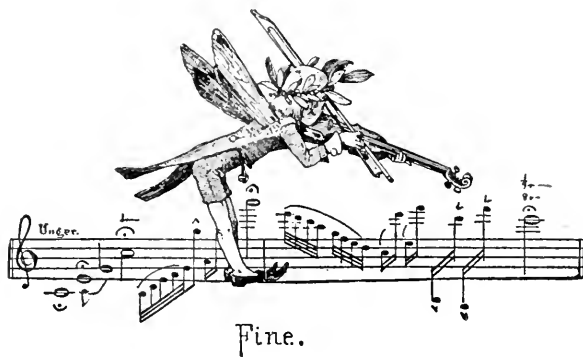
Dr. A. C. Mackenzie, Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, also recently delivered himself of some words to the same purpose, which, though few, were equally emphatic. He insists that "it is general culture which is wanted; that all round general education which will enable the musician not only to be eminent in his particular department, but fit him to cope with the ever-increasing competition which every other profession has to

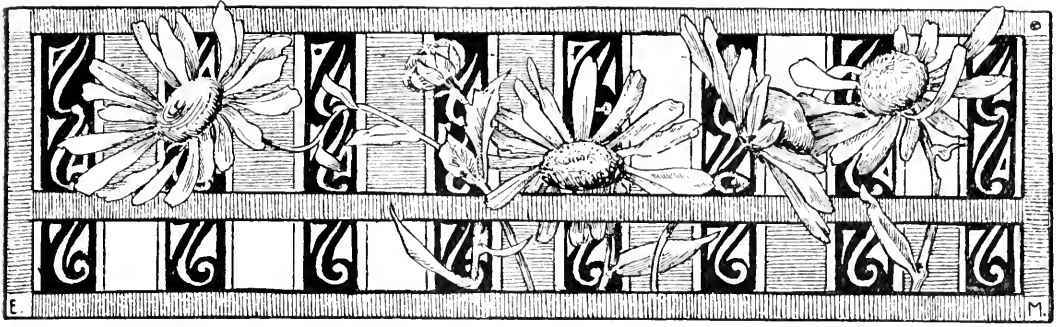
face, and permit him to take his place in any social circle or condition of life. . . .

"Better, more enlightened teaching will be the inevitable result of a wider culture and more extensive general knowledge."

Another matter of the highest importance is that the teacher be conscientious. If a singing mistress, after giving a pupil a preliminary course of lessons (say one quarter), considers her voice worth cultivating, then the utmost pains should be bestowed upon it. It is, unhappily, the practice of a few professors to be lax and negligent in teaching their less gifted pupils, while bestowing infinite care upon any who are exceptionally talented. But this ought not to be. When a teacher considers any voice worth training at all, she should spare no pains to develop its latent possibilities. Such care brings its own reward, for it is marvellous how the most unpromising voices often mature into absolute beauty when teacher and pupil unite in working with intelligence and enthusiasm.

The successful teacher is she who never lets her attention flag for one moment, whose faculties are ever on the alert to note the slightest progress or deterioration in her pupils—and as a result, the painstaking, persevering teacher who is really mistress of her vocation always succeeds in the end, her pupils forming the weightiest testimony to her efficiency.





## A COSTLY FREAK.

BY MAXWELL GRAY,

*Author of "The Silence of Dean Maitland."*

### CHAPTER XII.

M R. RAY complained not against the justice of man : he saw too clearly how criminal his conduct must appear to the world ; nay, at times he was ready to curse his folly in supposing that things so obviously the result of complicated human workmanship as banknotes should have been referred by him to direct supernatural agency. He bitterly owned himself superstitious and gullible, as well as presumptuous, and found himself face to face with the fact that he had been virtually criminal, having appropriated to his own use, like any common thief, that which, had he properly reasoned upon it, he would have seen to be the property of another. Yet the tribute-money in the fish's mouth was equally the result of human handiwork, visibly stamped with the Cæsar's effigy, and inscribed with his titles. He had once been angry with Burroughes for maintaining from the pulpit that human hands had doubtless dropped or thrown that particular coin into the sea and that it was quite in the ordinary course of nature for a fish to be beguiled by its glitter and take it in its mouth.

Thus he was restrained, not only by fear of desecrating holy things should his belief in the miraculous origin of this money become common knowledge, but also by the unacknowledged terror of making himself ridiculous, from saying how he became possessed of those miserable notes. His legal advisers could get nothing from him on the subject ; his wife and his friends wearied themselves with fruitless conjectures.

His wife one day went so far as to ask him how it was that he had "made the unfortunate mistake" concerning the ownership of those notes, urging that it was his duty to give some explanation, so that he might be cleared of a suspicion deadly for others as well as to himself.

"Dear Edith," he replied, after a look of pain and amazement, followed by a long pause, "we have known each other from early youth ; we have lived happily together for twenty-five years of middle life, in the closest communion permitted to human beings, and——" his voice failed him, "and," he added faintly, "you—you—believe me——" he could say no more, but the word "guilty" was as clear as if spoken.

"No, no," she murmured, "not that. Tempted—mistaken—but not—not——"

He turned away with a sad gesture of the hand and sad wonder in his heart. His lovers and friends were put away from him, and his acquaintance stood afar off. He prayed for death.

"But why for death?" Millie asked him one evening, after vainly trying to coax him out into the fresh air, "surely that is very cruel to us."

"Nay, I can be but a burden henceforth. Were I gone, others might take pity on my wife and children."

"Father," she remonstrated, "this is not like yourself. Where is your faith? It is you who must take pity on us, and do your utmost to have your innocence proved. How can you doubt that it will be proved?"

"All is against me, Millie. No one believes in me, not—not even your mother. I can never

clear myself in the sight of man, my dear. Only God knows—He knows all—and pities all.”

“You must not say that no one believes in you, father, it is not true, for I believe in you. Am I nobody?”

“Nay, you are my very dear child.”

“And do you think I shall rest till you are cleared? I daresay you think I can do nothing, being only a girl. But who can tell? Even girls are useful sometimes.”

“Oh, my dear, you stab me with those words,” he interrupted. “You have been my great comfort and stay, Millie. I have not valued you enough. I have not considered you as I ought, my dear. I was so wrapped up in my poor boy. I let you toil and toil and now——” his voice broke and tears dimmed his eyes.

Millie laid her soft cheek against the worn and furrowed face and wound her arm round the bowed shoulders. “Father,” she said, “don’t say that. Why, you *know* that you spoil me. And we all care most for Wattie—poor Wattie—who has so little.”

“And you really believe in me—against your reason?” he asked, presently, still with the warm young cheek pressed to his.

“Yes, I believe in you—in spite of appearances,” she replied, slowly and thoughtfully. “I believe in God,” she added, as if that were a necessary sequence.

He clung to her silently and tremblingly in an emotion she could not divine. The simple words, in the low sweet young voice, were to him as the strong arm of some mighty angel, gathering his soul up and away from the black and bottomless abyss over which it bent shuddering. There may be no heavenly Father, was the ever-present spectre of his mind in the darkness during which that heavenly Father seemed to have withdrawn from him. Yet his child believed in him—in spite of appearances. Should he tell her *all*?

The question of the poor curate’s guilt was in those days much debated at the rectory. Of the matter of that guilt, George had, and, as a rational being, could have, no doubt, but the manner of it greatly exercised him. His cousin still, as she said, flew the curate’s colours at her masthead.

“Heaven bless you for your womanish unreason, my dear,” he broke out one day, “though it can

do nothing for him. If we could but have a female jury! They’d get him off like a shot.”

“The compliment, my good George, is about as dubious as they make them,” she returned, with her accustomed tranquillity. “It is a mercy you gave up all idea of the diplomatic service. I admit that appearances are inexplicable with our present possession of facts. But there must be a clue somewhere, if we could only find it.”

“If,” he echoed. “Of course,” he added, “I don’t credit poor old Ray with actually putting his hands into my pockets, but I can’t for the life of me think how that thrice-accursed case got out of them without hands. And even supposing that I had taken it out myself, and put it on a table or dropped it, there was not the shadow of a doubt about the ownership: there were my letters, bills, and that blessed half sermon. Fancy anybody, especially Ray, stealing *my* sermons.”

“I can’t, George, I really can’t. I’ve a powerful imagination, too.”

“I suppose—now I happen to know that he was worried and excited that evening, and also that he was hard up. I suppose that pernicious case must somehow have got out of my possession and that, in a moment of mental aberration, the poor fellow must have been tempted beyond his strength. He might have meant to return the money later, who knows?”

“I don’t agree with you,” his cousin returned, with emphasis. “If Mr. Ray had lost his wits he would not steal. He would preach, pray, fast, sing hymns in the Queen’s highway, think he had committed the unpardonable sin, that he was the Pope, the Sultan, the Queen of Sheba, or his own grandfather—but he would never do wrong.”

“Brava, Maud, brava! There are moments when I could worship you, my dear.”

“——Suppose now that the *thief* gave him the notes for money——”

“You are a good girl, Maud, but you can’t reason. And you’ve said that before. Besides, the letter-case hidden in the drawer!”

“The thief might have put it there afterwards.”

“Far-fetched, too far-fetched, my dear, but I could grovel at your feet for the thought.”

“Then, you see, that would account for the sealing of his lips. It might be a point of honour not to tell. The thief might have been nearly related to him.”

"It won't do, Maud, the cap doesn't fit. Besides, who could have taken that money if not Honeybun or—an inmate of Ray's house?"

"You may exhaust yourselves with conjectures, but you will always stumble on that difficulty," Mrs. Burroughes interposed. "It is surely one of those mysteries of human frailty that can never be solved. But what *will* become of those poor Rays? The girls, of course, can never marry now."

"Why not?" came sharply, almost rudely, from George, who, till then lounging in a low seat by the fire, sprang to his feet, looking overpoweringly tall as he stood on the hearth-rug, towering above the two ladies, who were cosily reclining in low seats by the fire. "Why not?" he repeated, giving himself a shake by stretching out his arms, and jerking them farther into his coat-sleeves, as if making ready to do battle *à outrance* with whomsoever disputed his opinion. "Show me the hound that would throw a girl over because her father was—in the shade, and, by George! the beggar's bones wouldn't be much good to him any more!" he added, with another vigorous Newfoundland-dog shake.

"But is either of the Ray girls *engaged*?" asked Maud, in dulcet tones of purest innocence.

"My dear boy, pray don't eat us up alive," remonstrated his mother, "neither Maud nor I have proposed to the Miss Rays."

"Beg pardon," growled George, scowling darkly at the hearthrug, while his cousin looked at his down-cast face with a singular glitter in her half-veiled eyes, and sighed an unconscious sigh.

"Rise up, Sir George, champion of distressed damsels," she said, softly, and he lifted his head and looked her straight in the face with a searching, steady, half-defiant look.

"Well?" he said, "well?"

"Well?" she replied, sweetly smiling, "well?"

Mrs. Burroughes also smiled, but to herself, and became absorbed in the charms of the Persian cat, seated in solemn hauteur upon her knee. "Maud is touched at last," she reflected, "and, spite of all her advantages, she might do worse. This is the Nemesis of flirts."

The day was stormy with the same wild northeaster George had rashly invoked, and they were gathered round the fire in a sheltered south room after luncheon to idle and chat. The room was

daintily and cosily arranged in a strictly feminine style. George accused it of being rampantly ladylike, and professed to hate it. Needlework was about, novels strewn broadcast; flowers, and what George called chair-and-table millinery, prevailed; he was only there on sufferance, and had already upset a work-table composed of two sticks and the bottom of a basket, and a flower-pot stand made of three bamboo canes and a palmetto leaf.

"The wind's getting round by north to nor-nor-west," he said, going to the window. "There will be a fall of something—probably snow,"

"And spirits," Maud added, with a sigh.

"Better from above than from below, Maud."

"If you mean from below stairs, George," Mrs. Burroughes added, "I agree with you, though at funerals, even when not Irish, a little whisky"—

"Mother! mother! this levity at your years! Well, I'm off. There's the knell!"

It was Thursday afternoon, and that Perkins, whose death on the previous Friday forenoon Mr. Ray had comforted with his ministrations, was to be buried.

George thought of the way in which that death-bed had been attended in a speechless wonder, while standing bare-headed and shivering in surplice and cassock, at the church door and waiting for the arrival of the silent guest he was to welcome with comfortable words at the gate—words literally blown from his lips by the fury of the winds shrieking round the church, when at last he went forth and pronounced them amid flakes of whirling snow.

He reflected with some shame that the idea of sitting up all night unasked with a dying parishioner had never occurred to him, and that, but for poor Mr. Ray, this dear, departed brother might have trodden the dark valley un comforted by his fellow man. And this set him thinking afterwards, when the solemn task was done, masons were bricking up the vault and he found himself alone in the vestry with the sexton, who was not a bell-ringer, blue-nosed and shivering, with sleet drops in his hair.

"For pity's sake, be off home before you freeze on to the church floor, Baker," the rector said, "and get your wife to give you a cup of hot tea. I'll lock up."

The sexton went cheerfully, his steps making a

quick drum tap to the slow knell, and George remained alone in the vestry, which was cold with the deadly cold of old stone walls, and was about as cheerless a chamber as could be imagined. Yet he lingered in it, looking over registers, arranging parish papers, and doing other odds and ends, with purple fingers and visible breath. And then he stood by the empty fireplace, thinking and thinking, till his breath dimmed the small mirror, in which Mr. Ray usually forgot to look before going into church with disastrous results, the knell sounding through his meditations.

There is no record of George's thoughts on this Lenten afternoon; it is to be hoped that he thought of his sins and considered his latter end with advantage to his soul; but there is absolutely no reason to doubt that among and through his reflections, of whatever complexion they might have been, he saw a vision of soft brown eyes, innocent and young and, the last time his bodily eyes beheld them, very, very sad. Nor is it needful to say what manner of conclusions these soft eyes wrought in his mind; for, when soft eyes pervade the mental atmosphere of male youth, the effects they produce on that atmosphere may easily be conjectured by the least imaginative of mankind.

As he stood there he could see the weather through the little deep-set, diamond-framed Gothic window, and the weather was wild and fitful, an angry rush of sobbing rain and stinging sleet suddenly ceasing in a bright sun-burst that threw up the soft yet vivid flush of spring leafage on elm-tree boles and hedgerows, and drew millions of quivering jewels from turf-clad graves.

Taking advantage of one of these sun-bursts, just as the knell stopped, he went out and locked the door with due care and then stepped briskly along the narrow path between the green grave mounds, holding his felt hat on in the teeth of the gusty wind, so that, his vision being to a certain extent obscured, he was startled, on passing the great century-old yew, to see a figure flit from its leeward side, and to encounter the actual gaze of the brown eyes, now filling his mental vision.

"How do you do, Mr. Burroughes?" Millie said. "I was beginning to fear I had missed you. I came round this way on purpose to see you."

"Oh! Miss Ray, you surely have not been waiting, and in this storm?" he exclaimed, looking at the wet umbrella in her hand and then at her

face, that was marbled with pink and stung with rain and sleet, and at the melting sleet flakes caught in her hair. "If I had had the faintest suspicion"—

"I was fairly sheltered beneath the yew," she replied, glancing up at the thick roof of black-green gloom, which had arched over some ten generations, now sleeping beneath its shade. "I particularly wished to see you. I have no time to go to your house, and you cannot come to ours at present, so the only thing was to intercept you here after the funeral," she added, turning a little to meet at a more convenient angle the wind that tossed her draperies, ruffled her hair, and stung her cheeks.

George, still holding his hat with one hand, took out the vestry key with the other, and hesitated a moment. Then he put the key in his pocket. "Come round to the south porch," he said, as if by a happy inspiration, "it will be less exposed to the weather than this. One can't discuss things comfortably in a gale." He debated with himself as he spoke upon the comparative propriety of meeting young ladies alone in vestries with closed doors, and in church porches open to the public eye—should that eye chance to be borne by limbs of any description through or past the churchyard at that particular and tempestuous moment, which was highly improbable.

They therefore made the round of the church, passing beneath the shadow of the tall, grey belfry, and buffeted, as it seemed, in that exposed situation, by all the winds of heaven. The sunshine faded as they went, a great black mass of cloud-wrack swept over the sun's disc and burst in stinging sleet upon them, so that Millie shut her eyes and reached the shelter of the arched stone porch breathless. But she seemed indifferent to the weather, hardly heeding it except by putting up her hand to dash the blown hair from her eyes, and shake the white flakes from her clothing, while George, with a thumping and warmth inside his chest to which he was wholly unaccustomed, took her umbrella, opened and shook it, and asked permission to do the same by the rain-cloak, the hood of which, having been drawn over her head in the storm, had fallen back flecked with sleet and in picturesque disorder.

But this service was declined, and there was silence in the porch, broken by the rustle of sleet and scream of wind, he having nothing

to say, and she waiting to get her breath back. And during this pause, which to George seemed long and yet very pleasant, it occurred to him that this was not the girl who had walked with him in the sunset a week ago: she looked taller, she seemed older, the childhood had died out of her face, which was turned sideways to him, looking thoughtfully out into the driving sleet, lighted now by a sun-gleam. Even her voice seemed different: it contained more notes, and her manner made him feel smaller than he was. When he waited under the thorn for her a week ago, she had been to him as a fragile creature, to be taken to his heart and sheltered from all the winds of heaven; but to-day he discerned in her that divinity which hedges about maiden womanhood, and before which noble manhood uncovers the head and bends the knee in silence.

### CHAPTER XIII.

GEORGE stayed his stalwart shoulders against the clustered stone columns of the porch, half blocking the arched opening, as if to shut out the storm from Millie and shelter her with his body. Immediately behind her, reared on end against the stone wall, with its chains dangling, stood the black bier that had but just borne the body of Perkins to his grave, a juxtaposition that gave him a small shudder. Then the remembrance that weddings always entered by the south door, and that the dress of every bride swept that bier afforded him some comfort. Over the porch was an old-fashioned sundial, its gnomon now whitened by the sleet, its carved motto, "*Pereunt et imputantur*," and its shadow alike effaced by the storm; on the point of the gable was a stone cross. When the wind lulled they could hear the clock ticking slowly in the belfry, the audible pulse of Time; in front of them were the mouldering graves of long-forgotten dead.

These two, in the beginning of their brief moment of time, transient as a flash, in face of the dust of those forgotten generations, were fully alive, more fully alive, perhaps, than much of that forgotten dust had ever been, more fully alive, perhaps, than themselves had ever been before or would ever be again, and these young throbbing lives of theirs seemed to them, not as a shadow that hasteth, but as eternity in length and in significance very great.

Centuries and centuries of unbroken silence,

darkness, not-being; then a moment of being, a vivid flash on the darkness, and again, closing back like water parted by an oar-stroke, centuries and centuries of silent nothingness. And yet such fever and fret, such hope and fear, as if it were worth while to be at all, much less to be blissfully. And yet such anguish of balked desire, of baffled passion and crushed hope, such eagerness to fill that fleeting span with heart's desire and fulness of transient joy, such terror of long blank emptiness in that brief moment, if spent without fruition of youthful hope, while the silence waits quivering, ready to close back upon the tiny cleft of the oar-stroke.

The yew, from its heart of green gloom, had seen it all many a time, and the sun-dial had looked on the comedy, and the crumbling, illegible gravestones. Lovers meeting in that porch had passed beneath as bride and groom, had carried their babes beneath it to the font, and been borne silent, with folded hands, beneath it to the earth in the yew's shadow: their children had, in like manner, risen and walked and lain down for ever, and their children after them, in sight of the sun-dial and the cross, round each of which the shadow crept still, as in the beginning.

The clock had not ticked many seconds out before Millie regained her breath and her voice, and George his self-possession.

"My father must not be found guilty, Mr. Burroughes," she began, without any preamble: for she was never one to beat about the bush, but always went straight at things. "He ought not to be tried."

"Dear Miss Ray," he returned, "was it necessary to wait so long in the storm to tell me that? I did my best to obtain his discharge. Do you think there is anything I would not do to prove his innocence? My brother, who is to defend him, is an able man. He has a growing reputation. The other counsel is, as you know, quite a leading man and a Q.C. He could scarcely have better counsel with the pick of the whole Bar."

"Oh! *How* can you go into court and give evidence against my father?" continued Millie, with a quiver of her lip, "I wonder you dare do such a thing."

"I am advised that it is best, I assure you; else I would refuse to obey the subpoena. That would only involve a short imprisonment for con-

tempt of court. I think you know that that would be a small thing for me to risk for your father's sake. But it would not serve him to withhold my evidence now, the lawyers say, and I think perhaps even you will see, if you consider the subject. The sifting of evidence and the bringing everything to light, will, if he is innocent—"

"If!" she broke in. "Mr. Burroughes, you *know* my father, you have worked with him for months, and you doubt his innocence! Surely, surely you must see the impossibility of the thing imputed to him!"

"It is not what I see or do not see, dear Miss Ray," he returned, meekly, "it is a question of circumstantial evidence."

"Evidence! What is evidence in the face of character? Mr. Burroughes, you cannot really impute this base and dishonourable conduct to my poor father? Surely you must acknowledge in your heart that such a thing is incredible."

George looked down at the worn flags in the porch, and was silent and conscious of many sins.

"You will talk about the evidence of your senses, no doubt," she continued, "but what is evidence of the senses in comparison with evidence of faith, of trust, of honour? Oh! Mr. Burroughes, have you been so much with my dear father and not seen that he has the heart of a child, is one of those little ones of whom it is said that of such is the kingdom of Heaven?"

"I have seen that, I have thought that," replied George, humbly, "I may venture to say that facts, or rather appearances—such evidence of the senses as we possess—are to me as incredible as to you."

"Ah! that is right, I like to hear you say that," she replied, with a gasp, "for it is cruel to doubt him, cruel! But it is not enough to believe, Mr. Burroughes, we must act, act, act."

"Quite so. We don't believe in Faith without works," he assented, smiling a little in a thoughtful pause. "If we could but get him to act, Miss Ray," he added with more energy. "If he *would* but explain how those miserable notes came into his hands!"

Millie paused a moment, looking through wet eyes past George at the rushing sun-lit rain. "You said you would be my friend, whatever happened," she began abruptly, turning a wistful gaze upon him; "can I trust you? Dare I trust you?"

"Ay, *that* you can, my life upon it," was the fervid reply.

"He thought—" she turned away with a little sob, "poor father!—he thought—but this is a dead secret, remember, and must not come out in court—he thought them a direct answer to prayer. The pity of it—he found them in his Bible—only those two! Poor, innocent, trustful, old man! He was so glad, so thankful. Don't you remember the sermon that very next Sunday?"

George turned his face away, much moved, and Millie's sobs had free vent.

"The question is, dear Miss Ray," he said, after a little, "how those notes got there. Not without hands, but whose? Not mine, not yours, yet the hands of someone in the house. Might he have done it in a dream? Does he ever walk or talk in his sleep? You know I was with him long in private that afternoon. He was troubled and excited—probably under the influence of one dominant and fixed idea—need of money for Walter's sake."

"In his sleep? The idea is new. Oh! Mr. Burroughes," she cried, "if he did that he is lost."

"I wish to heaven I hadn't suggested it! You'd better sit on this," cried George, seeing her sway, and taking the bier down to its natural position and placing it across the church door. "You've been walking and standing and battling with the storm all this while and—I'll get you some wine from the vestry, shall I?"

"No—oh, no! I'm not such a poor creature as that," she replied, taking the singular seat offered her. "That sleep-walking idea is deadly. You see, there could be no proof, no evidence. It would amount to the fact that *he* took the notes, and to nothing more. But, even in that case, the notes must have been in the house, virtually in his possession first."

"Quite so," George agreed. He had taken a seat on the bier beside her, sitting sideways, that he might face her, and stayed himself in that position by an arm outstretched against the chamfered stone lintel, a little behind and above her. The sleet and rain were over and the sun was shining brightly now, but they had not observed it, nor did they observe a light-footed figure passing in front of their porch; for Millie was looking down on the foot-worn flags, and George was looking upon her face, and the sun, though some points south of west, cast the passer's shadow at this hour quite clear of the porch, only grazing the steps and east lintel.



"Quite so," he assented, "we have still to account for the spiriting of those thrice-cursed things from my pockets. To that end I rack my brains night and day—I even dream about it."

"When you were alone with him in the other room, did you take anything from that pocket? Did you sit in such a way that it might have fallen from the pocket? You brought Walter the Tennyson that afternoon."

"I carried that in my hand. I've gone over it all so often in memory. But I cannot remember putting my hand to my pocket once. It was dark before I left, and the lights were insufficient."

"Do you remember the handkerchief I brought you the next day? No? I gave it into your own hands in the presence of your mother and Miss Ascott. I went to the Rectory ostensibly on purpose. My mother picked it up on the Saturday forenoon in the sitting-room, in a dark corner under the table—not near the bureau. No one would pick a pocket and let a handkerchief, certain to be marked, lie about the room to tell tales."

"By George! this is a point!" he cried, springing to his feet and making a few paces in the porch. "You can swear to the handkerchief, so can your mother. I have a sort of vague memory of something you put into my hand that afternoon. It seemed to be a letter. I must have taken out the handkerchief and dragged the case out with it. The case would have fallen open, of course, but the notes couldn't have flown between the leaves of that Bible, even if it had been lying open."

"It is never left open. It is only used at family prayer. I put it ready to be used myself that morning. I dusted it myself before breakfast. We all stand with our faces to the wall at prayers, so that none of us saw the finding of the notes. But I remember a long pause after the Bible was opened, and my poor father, in a moved voice, instead of reading a chapter, calling upon us to kneel down and give thanks for signal mercies received. Poor father! poor guileless heart!"

"Did Bella put the notes in the Bible? Ask her."

"No, she did not. She has never so much as seen bank notes. We, of course, asked her. Nor had she touched or seen the letter-case."

"Counsel ought to be instructed of this finding, Miss Ray."

"Never without my father's permission. It is

his secret. I thought I might tell you, under the seal of strictest secrecy, remember, because it might help you to throw light upon the loss of these notes. But you must never, never betray me: it would be sacrilege in his eyes to publish it. And I should not have told you, perhaps, but—but"—her face flushed all over, and she looked straight away into the budded elm-boughs and greening hedges, vivid now in the long, level rays of the sinking sun.

"But you *know* that you may trust me," he added, resuming his place on the bier and again staying himself by a hand on the lintel behind her, "dear, dearest, when you know that I love you with all my heart."

"Hush!" she said, starting away from him and rising, "you must not speak in that way. How can I think of my own happiness—of anything but my father's misery and dishonour?"

"Dear, it is in misery and trouble that people need each other and find each other."

"Not in misery like this. This sets one apart. Disgrace—dishonour"—

"No, no—not for you!"

"Yes, for me. If for him—for me. 'Till he is cleared—for me."

"Oh, Millie! Millie!"

"Hush! hush! Not that tone, Mr. Burroughes. Never again. For one in my position there can be no ties but such as date from birth. Pray remember that. Perhaps I had better not have told you this thing. But if you think on it, other things may come to your memory. The handkerchief may help. The lawyers must of course hear of that. I cannot say what hopes I have in that handkerchief—unreasonable hopes, perhaps."

"Millie, I will move heaven and earth to clear him," said George, who had risen when she did, and was standing face to face with her, his eyes bright and dark with deep feeling. "But, cleared or not, you are mine, remember, as I shall always be yours. You must not be morbid, whatever happens. And what have I done that *my* life should be spoilt?"

"This is no time for such talk," she replied, with quivering lips, paling face and wet eyes. "Please do not make me regret this confidence. Consider our position, and you will see that it is unbecoming for me even to be seen with you at present; so much so that I was going to ask you to leave the churchyard by another gate from that I take."

"I don't see it," he returned, sturdily, "I can't see it, and I won't see it. But your wish must be law—only! Oh! Millie! those wretched bits of paper! If I'd only put them in the proper place, in my pocket-book—by the way, counsel ought to make a point of that. Nobody would dream of taking a letter-case for money—a thief would take a pocket-book or purse. Oh, there is no doubt but I must have dropped the thing in taking out my handkerchief, but why in the name of all that's bothersome did I drop that disastrous handkerchief?"

"At all events," she rejoined, "the finding of the handkerchief proves that you took it out and points to the letter-case falling with it. The rest is still dark," she sighed, "still dark."

In the meantime the passer-by, whose shadow had not been perceived by the two in the porch, had sped quickly beneath the yew and round to a little low door opening into the chancel, of which she had the key.

Entering by this, she shut it and turned the key on the inside and sat down in one of the choir stalls. Her heart was aching with sharp pain, her dark heartsease eyes were clouded and downcast, on her mental vision was indelibly engraved a picture of the two in the porch sitting on the bier, their figures outlined clearly against the massive oaken door in the Gothic stone archway. Millie, delicately flushed and animated, storm-blown and picturesque, with the white flakes melting in her ruffled hair and falling hood. George, absorbed in her, earnest feeling expressed in every line of his strong frame, almost sheltering her with the arm stayed against the door-jamb, his face, unseen, yet all the more eloquent to her imagination, stimulated as Maud's was.

She could see the inside of the south door and felt the two sitting on the outside, their voices, the sound of which she had caught in passing, inaudible through the massive oak door and solid stone walls. She, too, heard the slow, loud ticking of the clock in the belfry tower and nothing else but the quick, fierce beats of her own heart.

She bowed her head over the book-ledge in front of the stall and covered her face: hot, scalding drops fell from the dark eyes on to the psalter lying there; the world had turned gray and strange, without light; she did not know herself; she was like a little lost child in a wood at nightfall. Why this

piercing pain, this homeless, homesick anguish? the poor beauty wondered.

She had never known pain, and was unacquainted with sorrow. Lightly and unconsciously she had broken many hearts, amused at the havoc made by her beauty and charm, pleased with the incense of adoration and ignorant of the pain it caused. Lightly and gaily she had fluttered through her youth, taking pleasure and amusement as her daily bread, with no aim except to enjoy with the fulness of perfect health and perfect youth. It had never seemed strange to her that the most plastic and precious years of life, years passed even by the most richly gilded male youth in study and discipline, should be entirely devoted to the pursuit of frivolous and empty pleasures; like other girls, she was quite ready to accept what should be relaxation from effort as the object of existence, and, like others, in this unnatural way of living she had suffered in mind, soul, and heart, though, unlike others, she had been scathed and scarred less than might have been expected by those Moloch fires through which the wealthy classes pass their girl children, after making them spend childhood in learning to ignore the realities of life and in diligent study of a distorted, maimed, and false picture of the world. No great demand had ever been made on her emotions, no claim on her unselfishness, and no sorrow had corrected the enervating tendency of incessant enjoyment.

But to-day the poor butterfly beauty had her dark hour at last—such an hour as she had often caused in pure lightness of heart—and drank deeply from the cup of bitterness she had so often given to others, alone in the cold, empty church, bowed down in the choir-stall as if praying—as she may have been.

The clock ticked on; aureoled saints looked serenely down from jewel-coloured windows upon the still figure alone in the dim church; the shadow of the cross and the sun-dial marked the passing minutes; the sun sank, the shadow was lost; a brown gloom gathered about the arches. The still figure moved with a heavy sigh and looked up, with helpless trouble in the dazed eyes and dark crescents beneath them.

Taking the basket she had brought with her, she went to the altar, where the dusk was already deep, and removed the flower-vases to the vestry, where

she re-arranged and renewed them from the basket. But she paused over one rose, holding it thoughtfully in her hand for a minute, and replacing it in the basket. Having replaced the vases on the dim altar, she turned outside the rails as if to judge of their effect, and suddenly fell on her knees and covered her face.

She left the church by the north side, thus avoiding the porch under the sun-dial, and set off home at a brisk pace, much buffeted by the wind.

She had not gone far before she overtook another female figure, buffeted in like manner by the wind, and in as great a hurry as she. It was that of Millie, who turned at the sound of the quick footsteps behind, and looked into a laughing face, richly crimsoned by the wind, and soft pansy eyes full of light, and slackened her pace with a bow of recognition. But a warm hand clasp and winning smile brought her to a momentary standstill.

"We are going the same way, Miss Ray. What a wind! Tiring, isn't it? I've been wanting so much to call, but couldn't summon up courage. I daresay your father and mother would not see me if I did. How are they? And have you heard from Walter? So glad he likes Bournemouth. The pines will do him good. So good for lungs."

"He says that your friends are very kind to him, Miss Ascott."

"Oh! the Hope-Ascotts; they delight in Walter. Everybody likes Walter. I quite miss him. I've some idea of sending him a love-letter."

"Walter would be delighted. He likes you so much. I am afraid I must go in; I am late. My mother sees no one at present," Millie said, pausing at her own door, her heart warming to this bright, pretty, happy Maud, who evidently meant so kindly towards her and hers.

"Good-night, then, dear Miss Ray," the latter replied, drawing the beautiful white rose from her basket. "Will you give this to your father, with my kindest regards, and tell him that I am *quite* sure things will come right."

"Thank you," was Millie's reply, in a faint, uncertain voice.

"Miss Ascott is a sweet young woman," was Mr. Ray's comment on the message—"a very sweet young woman." And Millie observed that the rose was placed within his sight, and that he sat looking at it all the evening long.

The night was so windy and cold, there was no question of persuading Mr. Ray to go out. Millie tried to cheer them by talking, but her topics were few and well worn, the hours dragged very slowly by and she was very tired and so white and worn that she was condemned to take a cup of something warm and nourishing—her life at this time seemed to bristle with dreadful cups of something warm and nourishing—but all the time she was thinking of the south porch.

The porch was empty now, and the black bier swallowed in blacker shadow; no living thing stirred there—not so much as an owl. But though the dark night hid the dark yew and the crumbling graves and obscured one dim little planet, it revealed an unmeasurable universe, teeming with suns and powdered with innumerable shining stars.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

THE morning was mild and sunny, the air sweet and caressing, alive with stimulating scents of young leafage and opening blossom. That freakish creature, Spring, was in one of those rare moods of soft penitence and genial relenting that enslave the hearts of mankind, making them forget all her mad devilries and compose verses to her countless charms.

The day of Mr. Ray's trial was at hand, the dropped handkerchief and the bits of bank-note therein had done little to enlighten his legal advisers as to the manner in which he had become possessed of the missing notes, the discovery of which in the Bible had been jealously guarded from them. George was in despair.

He was wont to seek, and also to find, consolation during affliction of whatsoever nature, in a short, black, and, to the female eye, an extremely dirty, pipe of dubious age and uncertain origin. This was not lightly resorted to, but carefully reserved for time of need, though there is reason to suppose that it was occasionally smoked in happier moments, to keep it in proper order. This, however, is matter of conjecture merely, and not to be regarded as historic truth.

On this sweet spring morning then, the illustrious pipe, which was known in the family variously as Jemima and Mrs. George, reposed between her master's lips and emitted pungent clouds of smoke upon the balmy sunny air. He was sitting on a rustic bench in a warm corner of the kitchen garden, bending carelessly forward, his eyes closely studying the

gravelled path, his feet stretched out before him a little apart, and his hands lightly clasped between his knees, his ears deaf to the fluting of blackbirds and hum of bees in budded fruit-trees. The gardener, perceiving his master there thus engaged, deemed it a lost opportunity not to profit by so good an example, and, knowing that the counsel given by the silent Mrs. George would occupy a good half-hour, had taken up a similar attitude in another warm corner by a greenhouse, on a wheelbarrow, in company with a shorter, blacker, and, if possible, dirtier pipe, filled with even more powerful tobacco, and looked as happy as mortal man can expect to be in a world containing east winds, frosts, slugs, and blight.

"Pff!" came from a lady's dainty red lips, as a lady's slim shadow fell upon the gardener's sunny Elysium. "Surely, Adams, there will be no slugs or snails this year. That tobacco is strong enough to kill every creeping thing in the garden."

"I reckon it is, Miss," he replied, touching his hat, but not removing his pipe. "What with consideren and consideren about the glass and the seeds and the planten out, and tryen to kill off blight, it do stand me in summat handsome a week for tobacco, to be sure."

The lady's shadow glided slowly on over the old-fashioned rose-bushes and espalier apple-trees, lavender bushes and pot-herbs, over the pink peach-blossoms on the sunny wall, to George's corner, and over the sacred fumes of Jemima herself. "Pff!" came again from the laughing red lips. "Singular creatures these men—deliberately spoiling the fresh air with horrid smells."

"I was under the impression," sighed George, reluctantly drawing the cherished Jemima from his lips and tenderly regarding her with a view to her extinction, "that I was alone in a selected corner of my own garden."

"Oh! I didn't come to put your pipe out, my good George, far from it. I wouldn't deprive you of the society of Mrs. George for the world. I will keep well to the windward of her, though. Well! well! what is it?" she asked, taking the place on the bench by his side.

"What is what?" he growled.

"Perhaps I ought to say, what is her name, George?"

"That's right, libel your own sex, my dear. All the nastiest things said of women have been said

by women," replied George, continuing his pipe and his attitude, which betokened extreme misery.

"After that severe snub I can do no less than take myself off, I suppose. But, fortunately, I'm not proud, and my disposition is forgiving, so I shall stay."

"Thank you," resignedly.

"Poor old George! Do you know that you are becoming a horrid bear?"

"A bear with a sore head isn't in it with me, Maud. It's awfully good of you to stop with such a brute."

"Well then, why not reward me by telling me all about it? Come now, what is the matter?"

"Well, if you must know, poor old Ray is the matter. It's enough to drive a fellow clean off his head."

"That is not the whole truth, George," very softly.

"No, it isn't. The whole truth is — his daughter—There! the murder's out!"

"Well! but she's an extremely nice good girl."

"When ladies can't think of anything spiteful enough to say of a girl, they call her a good girl. I often wonder why you always hated Miss Ray, Maud."

"Now, George, that *was* a nasty one," returned Maud, looking hurt, "and I don't deserve it," she added, "that I don't."

George looked up and was surprised to see that his cousin's eyes were wet. Jemima was at once put aside and suffered to go out on the bench, and Maud's gloved hand raised to his lips, with a due apology.

"I do like her," continued Maud, in an aggrieved voice, "and I admire her pluck in this business immensely. She's very young and she is coming out wonderfully, and has much more in her than anyone could have supposed at first sight of her."

"You are a dear girl, Maud, the very dearest of girls. Well! the plain, unvarnished truth is that Millie's all the world to me, and I can't *possibly* live without her."

"But why should you, dear George?" asked a very gentle and sweet voice.

"Because she won't have me—a fairish reason, as reasons run."

"George! You don't mean to say that you actually proposed to Millie Ray and she *refused* you?" came in more vigorous and emphatic tones from his cousin.

"Well, that's about it. Won't have me at any price," he replied, mournfully contemplating a worm-cast on the gravelled path.

"My good George, you must have grossly mismanaged this business. You always were celebrated for a genius for blundering," she commented, after some moments' silent contemplation of the rejected swain. "I strongly suspect," she added, "that you chose an unlucky time or an unlucky place. Now, in my own limited experience, I've had declarations and offers at very odd times and in amazingly queer places, but never, in all my life, do I remember having been made serious love to upon a bier."

"Upon a *what?*" cried George, with a flaming face. "Now how, in the name of all that is diabolical, could you know—?"

"In such a storm, too! Why *I* should have been too cross to accept the Marquis himself. I shouldn't recommend anybody to propose to *me* upon a bier, in an open porch, and an unbecoming east wind, Geordie."

"You—pernicious young fraud!" cried George, going off into one of his deep-chested roars. "Of all the nasty, inhuman actions, this beats the record. Well, I believe you are partly right, after all, though. To tell the solid truth, Maud, *she* said something like it—no time for that kind of thing. Well, you see, it's just this," he added, in a different tone, "I—I think perhaps she'd have me—though, of course, I don't know—but—you see, she's the very soul of honour, and she'll never marry till her father's cleared, and even if she did—I'm out of the running, because it was all my wretched fault."

"Cheer up, George, cheer up! Freshford bells will be set ringing for you yet. I think I see—in my mind's eye, Horatio—the school-children upsetting baskets of flowers and piping feeble cheers all over the place. It will be quite a smart little wedding. You'll blush madly and wish you'd never been born. You'll lose the ring. The best man, by main force, will prevent you from marrying a bridesmaid by mistake. Just fancy the *County Express*—'The Hon. Maud Ascott (cousin of the bridegroom) was strikingly and stylishly costumed in a confection of'—oh! something killingly splendacious, you may be sure—'the presents were numerous and costly'—sometimes they

are costly and numerous, never anything else—'The happy pair'—Oh, Geordie, she will be the very pink and pattern of a little parsoness. She cares for you, I saw it in her eyes." Her own were wet, but George did not observe this.

"Easily said!" he sighed.

"For pity's sake give notice before you puff like that again, George. A blast-furnace is a fool to it. It's enough to blow away the most solid obstacles to matrimony. I very nearly realized the truth of the fine axiom, '*Dulce est desipere in loco*,' 'It is sweet to disappear in a place.'"

"Don't do that, Maud. Your presence is, next to a quiet pipe, about the most comforting thing going."

"By the way," she said, after a pause, "look at this."

She drew from her pocket and placed in his hands a large envelope addressed to him. "I found this in Aunt Carrie's work-basket this morning."

"From Mrs. Ray. Poor soul! Perhaps at last she'll consent to see me and throw some light on the subject. Why—by all the powers—it's *the* handkerchief! Maud, you are my good angel! Look at the date! Oh, you prince of good fellows! The date!"

He drew it carefully from its cover and carefully examined it, holding it up to the light; a bit of thin paper dropped from a crease to which it had clung. Maud picked it up with an eager exclamation and smoothed its crumples out. It was of irregular shape, and had been torn by small teeth, to judge from its jagged edges; in the middle of it were three small round holes as if it had been clutched by a paw armed with fine sharp claws; it was the central portion of the missing twenty-pound note. Another much jagged bit of the same paper, less than an inch in size and apparently wrenched from the larger piece of the same, fluttered from another crease in the handkerchief.

"I'll take it to Mason at once," said George, who was pale with excitement. "But I should like Mill—Miss Ray to see it first. She won't meet me at her own house and she won't come here."

"Shall I take it to her? Suppose I go at once."

"Not at home. She doesn't leave Little Buckley till between four and five."

"I'll take it then," said Maud.

(To be continued.)

# THE ATALANTA SCHOLARSHIP AND SCHOOL OF FICTION



## THE HISTORICAL NOVEL.

*As Illustrated by Sir Walter Scott.*

BY EDWIN LESTER ARNOLD.

IN the whole range of fiction there is no branch where high success is more difficult to attain, or so lasting and honourable when it has been won, than in that of the historical novel. For what, it has always seemed to the ambitious author, could there be more fascinating, more useful to the service of the great public that is so slow to learn, or more prolific in opportunities for the writer himself, than rehabilitating and clothing a page of dead history with the very movement and colours that the episode of human life it chronicles once had, filling the dry shrunken veins of the past with the new blood of imagination and fancy, and making that to live again which duller minds have pronounced lost past all redemption? History becomes the most fascinating literature in the world when it is linked with romance, and romance itself gains dignity and weight by the association. A good historical novel is more valuable to a nation than a library of lesser books, and there are very few craftsmen of the pen who deserve more highly of their generation than the man or woman who can write such an one.

Unfortunately the apprentices in this art are out

of all proportion to the masters, for the necessary natural gifts are so rare that, though those who desire success are infinitely numerous, those who greatly succeed are exceedingly few. Almost the only way to accomplish anything in this direction worth its labour is to love and to study the achievements of those whose testimonials stand recorded in the delighted appreciation of generation after generation of readers.

Not a great master of his art, perhaps, but one who for this very reason (as being not above the frailties of ordinary literary flesh) may be the more readily taken as a model by those who would at least try to follow in his footsteps, Scott is, I think, a fair example to the writer of historical novels. I cite him with the more confidence because there is no doubt that the magic of the Wizard of the North is increasing rather than diminishing amongst us, and I look to see not very far from now the class of books which he made popular supersede and completely sweep away that poor, silly, threadbare thing that has come into fashion since scullery-maids began to read, and mercenary scribblers first exploited the aristocracy of Pimlico for the delectation of our shops and kitchens—the Society novel.

There was nothing in Scott's upbringing that I know of more inspiring than the upbringing of the most mildly-bred of any of us; but then he came of a race to whom tradition has been almost a religion, and with whose cradle-songs history has been intertwined since history began. He came to the great task of his novels with no supreme gift of learning; he undertook no special preparation for any one of them, and had sat at the footstool of no great magician to be taught what is perhaps unteachable. This is why I think, as I have said, he is perhaps a more encouraging master for the novice who ventures on this difficult but fascinating path than Lytton or Macaulay, those magnates born "in the purple" of letters. Scott's equipment was all of the simplest and roughest, and there was nothing in his upbringing which the humblest disciple of his craft may not have in a greater or lesser degree. At school, like many another subsequently famous man, he was something less than an indifferent scholar, his mastery of foreign languages—undertaken later almost solely that he might enjoy the myth and marvels of older romancers—gave him little or nothing which, in this present day of cheap and admirable translations, his modest imitator may or may not possess himself of at infinitely less cost of time and labour. Nor was there much in his early surroundings as a young man—a petty, if well paid, official of a great city—to fill him with splendid inspiration and call to life in his mind fancies, whether of verse or prose, at one time of such exquisite fairy-like delicacy as no one but Shakespeare at his sweetest has ever equalled, and at another move him to such heights of rugged strength as make us think we are listening again to the wild rhythm of Ossian, or the exulting song of some ancient scald round whose feet the war-play thunders as he harps, and the red stream of victory goes humming down the valley far below. His methods in writing were almost nil. A journey with the Commissioners of Northern Lights, undertaken for the most prosaic purposes, and affording nothing but chance runs ashore upon the wild northern islands, supplied all the incentive for "The Pirate;" and most of the brilliant succession of novels which commenced with "Waverley" owe their first origin to equally slender suggestions. Once an idea was started in Scott's mind he sat down to it straight away and wrote till it

was finished, with a persistence in which the tenacity characteristic of his northern blood was strangely blended with the ever-ready blaze of the fire of genius that some others of us find so difficult to kindle at a moment's notice. By scheme and plot he set no great store. A plot he declared was only a something to hang better things upon, and this accounts for the looseness of construction discerning critics have perceived in his tales. Neither did he largely read up for them, but drew on his immense stores of ready knowledge; and herein he can only be safely followed by those whose mind is as capacious and whose wit is as ready as his own. But at the same time, though his construction was free and his efforts unstudied, he knew well that the historical novel was the highest development of fictional literature, and he himself one of its brightest lights. On one occasion he defended this class of writings under cover of an anonymous review of his own books.

If, he wrote, anachronisms in manners can be avoided, "the features of an age gone by can be recalled in a spirit of delineation at once faithful and striking . . . the composition itself is in every point of view dignified and improved; and the author, leaving the light and frivolous associates with whom a careless observer would be disposed to ally him, takes his seat on the bench of the historians of his time and country. In this proud assembly, and in no mean place of it, we are disposed to rank the author of these works. At once master of the great events and minute incidents of history, and of the manners of the times he celebrates, as distinguished from those that now prevail, the intimate thus of the living and the dead, his judgment enables him to separate those traits which are characteristic from those which are generic; and his imagination, not less accurate and discriminating than vigorous and vivid, presents to the mind of the reader the manners of the times, and introduces to his familiar acquaintance the individuals of the drama as they thought and spoke and acted." And then again he says of himself: "The volume which this author has studied is the great book of nature. He has gone abroad into the world in quest of what the world will certainly and abundantly supply, but what a man of great discrimination alone will find, and a man of the very highest genius will alone depict after he has discovered it."

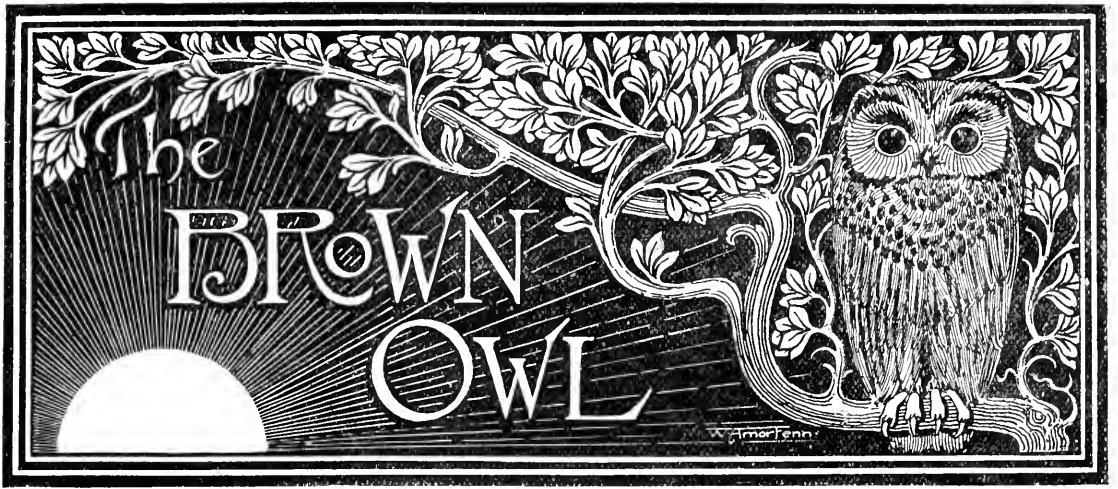
And how admirable the products of this high ideal and unartificial genius were! If we take "Ivanhoe," for instance, a book which an extensive plebiscite of English readers declared a few months ago to be the best novel in its class of the century, we find it is a cameo of the times it deals with; a bright and stirring picture of a striking epoch of our history: a thrilling story which takes the eager attention on from page to page and stirs our emotions just as the scenes which it depicts so admirably would have done. We are so thoroughly accustomed to take our history from the dry, pedantic sentences of the passionless library historian that we forget as we read that this pulsing sparkling narrative, full of a laughter and tear such as we can understand, and of low cunning which we can despise, and a malice which we can hate as keenly as though it marred our own happiness—is sound, good history. And yet it is so: history of the most insidious and delightful sort, teaching us, whether we will or no, by that inference and suggestion which is the subtlest kind of education. Thus, when in the siege of Torquilstone, Maurice de Bracy supplements his own prowess by vowing a candlestick of pure silver to the shrine of his patron saint if success awaits himself and his friends, we perceive instinctively that the Norman nobles were as superstitious as they were valorous. When again, in the same fight, the brave Saxon, Cedric, places the command in the hands of a foreign knight, we have the fact pressed upon us that Saxon warfare was utterly different from that of the Norman, and beyond his oak palisades and wattle breastworks the Thane knew nothing of martial attack or defence. So, too, the description earlier in the book of that one feast whereat King John and his courtiers watch with infinite amusement the princely boor, Athelstane of Coningsburgh, at his supper, teaches us more in a couple of pages about the conditions of manners and habits at the time than the studious critic could cram into a couple of verbose and ill-digested chapters.

I do not say that Scott never tripped in his facts. Homer sometimes nods, of course, Milton sometimes is illogical, Shakespeare has made his noble Roman, many years before the birth of Christ, compare the wounds upon his chest to "graves i' the churchyard set," and sometimes Scott himself blunders unpardonably. His heroes

(such as Bertram Waverley and Lovel) are also occasionally feeble—mincing, uncertain gentlemen, many of them not for a moment to be thought of on terms of literary equality with some of the effective people he sketched in happier moods. His scenes, too, are now and then melodramatic enough to have been the work of a young author who thinks the value of a canvas is the value of the paint he can get upon it. Scott wrote often in furious haste. "Ivanhoe" itself was written, or rather dictated (for its author was too ill to hold a pen) in the extremity of physical suffering. At times, again, he wrote with that dangerous knowledge that an excited and enthusiastic public was clamouring more for quantity from him than for quality, and that a huge encumbrance of debt had to be cleared away. But, in spite of all this, his work, though spontaneous and uncultivated, has never been equalled, I think, for its brilliant simplicity: and a young writer who would attempt this class of fiction, could scarcely lay a better foundation of his efforts than by, if not absolutely copying, yet by studying closely and lovingly the works of this wonderful man who made two great fortunes and an immortal name within the limits of a short lifetime.

The historical novelist, however, cannot have read too much or too variously. It is less the special critical reading of the bookworm he or she needs so much as the large acquaintanceship with the works of previous gleaners in the illimitable field of human facts. For a full book, well read, can convey as much knowledge to the receptive mind in a week as could be gleaned at first hand by months of laborious observation, and in a thousand books there is more knowledge than any one lifetime could lay up for itself. Scott was master of the accumulated lore of a thousand books, not a score of them, perhaps, being in the artificial curriculum of an ordinary education; and his immense resources of knowledge stored up in this way, combined with his keen genius, his shrewd native wit, and admirable powers of expression, enabled him to give to the creations of his fancy their marvellous air of reality, and to turn back the teeming pages of history before our wondering and delighted eyes in a way which has been equalled by few and excelled by none of those who have attempted the great but uncertain distinction of the historical novelist.





## THINGS IN GENERAL.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

THERE is nothing more uncomfortable than to descend from a high to a low ideal—to begin by aiming at very fine things, and to sink into very paltry and small, if not contemptible or ignoble things, as often happens in practical life, and sometimes immorally enough. It is a process which we see going on around us continually in the world. A young man begins with the noblest aspirations, meaning everything that is great and noble; his ambition seems hardly to have any limit unless he should strike his forehead on some star and realize thus that space is not infinite, his mind is made from his childhood to

“Frame he knows not what exelling thing  
And win he knows not what sublime reward  
Of praise and honour.”

He will be a great poet, a great general, a great legislator, the champion or the guide of his country: or perhaps a great philanthropist, spreading bounty and happiness round him. But when twenty or thirty years have passed, we find him a respectable clerk in a public office—a county court judge—a martinet colonel who has never been under fire, but who drives his men wild with all the punctilios of drill.

A girl, too, whose ambitions are more visionary and indefinite, who does not know what great thing she can be, but who means with the intensest vehemence of purpose to be something, greater than she can put into words, will gradually slip

under our very eyes before she is forty, into the old, immemorial office of suckling fools and chronicling small beer. And no harm done in either case. Practical life, and stress of circumstances accomplish such revolutions quite gently and unconsciously, bringing with them, in many cases, the sincere conviction that nothing is so good, nothing so blessed, as to do your duty in the condition to which God has called you, and to be content for all reward with daily bread, and love and the day's work. These fallen ideals are not necessarily sad; sometimes the *désillusionnement* brings wisdom with it, and one learns to allow one's disabilities and perceive how and why one has failed: they linger about us still with the fragrance of youth in them, and as they float away like harmless puffs of cloud from the sky of middle age, the little pang with which they are dismissed has in it a touch of humour, very kindly, as exercised against ourselves.

But it is a different thing when the deterioration is from a fine ideal to a very mean and poor one, as sometimes also happens, and the worst of all when the one is made to appear as if it naturally produced the other, and the good and noble standard is represented to us as turning inevitably in the sequence of cause and effect into the shabby and vulgar one. This is a transformation which a great many things and schemes undergo, leaving life always a little the poorer, and soiling the records of experience which cannot be called, in

external matters at least, a foundation of hope. How many years is it—I cannot remember—since we were all fighting for (or against) what had begun to be called the Higher Education of Women, a battle very stoutly fought and steadily gained, since now-a-days a girl who has studied at Girton or the other feminine halls and colleges is not a wonder at all, neither stared at, nor sneered at, nor even applauded as if she were something rare and strange. The Higher Education, for everybody who wishes for it and can afford to pay for it, has become a simple matter and needs to be fought for no more. But it was a worthy thing in its way, to say the least of it. I am not myself a very great believer in education. The Universities have not made such a fundamental difference in the young men that we should be induced to believe they would work any very important change in the young women. Nature and temperament and character triumph over everything, and what we do to our young people, in my experience, matters not very much one way or another: but that is a private and insignificant opinion, opposed to that of many much greater authorities. Anyhow, the object of securing for an eager world of high-spirited and intelligent girls the best that literature and training could give them, the most perfect education that up to this time all our sages have been able to decide upon—was a fine object. It was a high ideal that the enthusiasts of the time were striving for. All the missiles of scorn were thrown at it, boundless ridicule, derision which had no limits either of taste or temper. These were much stronger than any arguments that could be brought to bear against it: but even they were silenced, or partially silenced, and perhaps brought more or less to the shame that was their due. And the cause—which was a good cause and in its ideal a perfectly worthy thing—was triumphant, as it had a right to be.

I hear of a very different ideal now: it is hard to believe in it as a fact, and still harder to allow that the one of twenty years ago has anything to do with the other. There is but one step we know from the sublime to the ridiculous: but from the depths of silly vulgarity to the height of a reasonable and worthy ambition seems too great for any stride we know of. Seven-leagued boots are not large enough for such a step. The girl of

this period, it appears, has her grievances as the other girl had before the age of Girton: but they are of a totally different kind. Her grievance is that she cannot go out alone, as her brother does, to a music hall in the evening: that she cannot return alone through the London streets at any hour she pleases with a latchkey, or to, what would be better, independent lodgings of her own: that, in short, she is not a young man in the most foolish particulars of a young man's career, but a girl with a different set of circumstances surrounding her. This is a very different sort of thing from the desire for Higher Education. Many good people are willing to make sacrifices, to give themselves a great deal of trouble for the latter: does anybody think the music-hall and the latchkey things worth fighting for, or realities at all except as affording a subject for piquant articles in the magazines and panics as to the revolt of daughters? The music-hall is an institution with which I do not profess to be acquainted. I have read with care Mr. Albert Chevalier's articles descriptive of them, or, at least, of himself and his operations there, which are very much like the autobiographical experiences with which public performers of all kinds are apt to gratify us from time to time. He is a gentleman who has caught the knack of expressing extremely simple, primitive, and virtuous sentiments in the language peculiar to costermongers, which is not a perfect variety of the Anglo-Saxon tongue. The sentiments are unexceptionable. We have heard them all a great many times before, but that does not matter. But the language is not beautiful. It cannot be asserted to be melodious, for instance, or specially adapted for music or to contain fine and expressive idioms, or, indeed, anything that we are in the habit of claiming for the language most employed in fiction or on the stage. It is a debased dialect of the uneducated. It would be impossible to say that it was an injury to any human creature to be kept out of a knowledge of the costermonger's language. Not to know Greek and Latin was (perhaps) a real misfortune.

But the music hall after all, and the costermonger's songs, are not, I suppose, the object of the new revolt. If Mr. Chevalier had withdrawn, and they were filled with acrobats or marionettes, or anything else which attracted the crowd, it would, I presume, be just the same. It is the

freedom that is wanted, and not this individual manifestation of it. And indeed this desire is no new thing. Our housemaids have longed for it since ever I had any acquaintance with that class. They love to go about the gas-lighted streets, to talk and laugh, and have a chance of a laugh or a jest from some young man of their acquaintance roaming about in the same way—if not their own young man himself with whom the encounter is sweet. They mean no harm : they like the lights in the shop windows, the glow of the lamps, the sensation of the partial crowd in the street, the chance always aglow in every youthful soul of something—anything that may possibly happen. But then they have not the balls, the parties, the entertainments of the young ladies who very greedily wish to add this diversion too to the number of their amusements. But neither is the privilege of walking about the streets alone, or coming in with a latchkey, at the bottom of this rebellion. I think that I know what it is—the young women would like to be young men. Let not the reader laugh. It is not so absurd as it appears, and it is at the bottom of many internal revolts, indignations, ragings of repressed energies, which in former times never got utterance. But everything gets utterance now-a-days. I remember the feeling—one's bosom swelled, one's breath came quick. Oh! to be a man, with his boundless power of doing what he would : a being with no limits set

to him, with every career open before him, with all the tools of every profession ready to his hands. What could not I do? What could not we do were we but men? It is very silly, but it is not so silly as you think. It means every ambition, generous and otherwise : it means all that longing to be and to do, which is innate in so many young souls. One has only to put it into words to make it apparent how ridiculous, how impossible it is. It is easier to do this than to make the world perceive how, in a fiery young spirit, feeling itself capable of everything which it does not understand, this preposterous and futile, and altogether hopeless ideal might arise.

But I do not think that the heart of England need tremble for the revolters in this case. Not many girls will ever walk about the Strand alone in the light of the gas. The latchkeys will most of them be lost by the end of the first week. It was not to make themselves copies of men that they went to Girton and Lady Margaret Hall; and these have taken not only their legitimate place, but acquired the happy moderation of the established and certain, and become a part of life. But it could only be to copy men that a girl carried a latchkey and went to a music hall, and then not the best men, or the best parts of the life even of second-rate men. I think the alarmed mothers may smooth again their ruffled plumes. It is not this vulgar vagary which will do English girls any permanent harm.



## ATALANTA SCHOLARSHIP AND READING-UNION.

Four people, strangers to each other, arrive, by a series of accidents, at the same seaside apartments simultaneously : each one tries to substantiate a claim. Make a humorous incident out of the situation, emphasizing characters.

Papers not to exceed 500 words, and to be sent in by the 25th of the month.

## ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (FEBRUARY).

### I.

1. The horse.
2. *The Arab's farewell to his steed*, by the Hon. Mrs. Norton.

### II.

1. A shell. 2. *Maud*.

### III.

Milton's *Lycidas*.

### IV.

Bishop Heber's *Morte d'Arthur*.

### V.

The reference is to the two haughty maidens whose sad end is recorded in Hood's poem, *The Two Peacocks of Bedford*.

### VI.

Danton, in Carlyle's *French Revolution*.

### VII.

1. *Fairyland*. 2. Edgar Allen Poe.

### VIII.

Wordsworth's sonnets *To Sleep*.

## SEARCH QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

### I.

Give source of following lines :—

"O Melancholy, linger here awhile !  
O Music, Music, breathe despondingly !  
O Echo, Echo, from some sombre isle,  
Unknown, Lethan, sigh to us—O sigh !"

### II.

Give authors of following works :—

*Davidels*, *Venice Preserved*, *The Splendid Shilling*,  
*Dialogues of the Dead*.

### III.

To whom and by whom is written the following ?

"Splendour's fondly fostered child !  
And did you hail the platform wild,  
Where once the Austrian fell  
Beneath the shaft of Tell ?  
O Lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure !  
Whence learnt you that heroic measure ?"

### IV.

1. Who is addressed in these lines ?

"O Mother and Queen, beneath the olden spell  
Of silence, gazing from thy hills and skies !  
Dumb Mother, struggling with the years to tell  
The secret at thy heart through helpless eyes."

2. Give author.

### V.

1. What poet is spoken of in this verse ?

What bird in beauty, flight, or song,  
Can with the bard compare,  
Who sang as sweet, and soared as strong,  
As ever child of air ?

2. Give writer's name.

### VI.

1. Explain second line of this couplet :

"With Franklin grasp the lightning's fiery wing,  
Or yield the lyre of Heaven another string."

2. Give source.

### VII.

1. To what question are these lines an answer ?

"Not I,  
Who live, love, labour freely, nor discuss  
A brother's right to freedom. That is Why."

2. Who wrote them ?

### VIII.

Whence are taken these lines ?

"She bowed as if to veil a noble tear ;  
And up we came to where the river sloped,  
To plunge in cataract, shattering on black blocks,  
A breadth of thunder."







## Spring Lyric.

Buds ! that in blustering March  
 Peep in and out at play,  
 Clear floats the skiey arch,  
 Open and greet the day !  
 For backward-looking Winter now hath found  
 Where he may lay his old head underground.

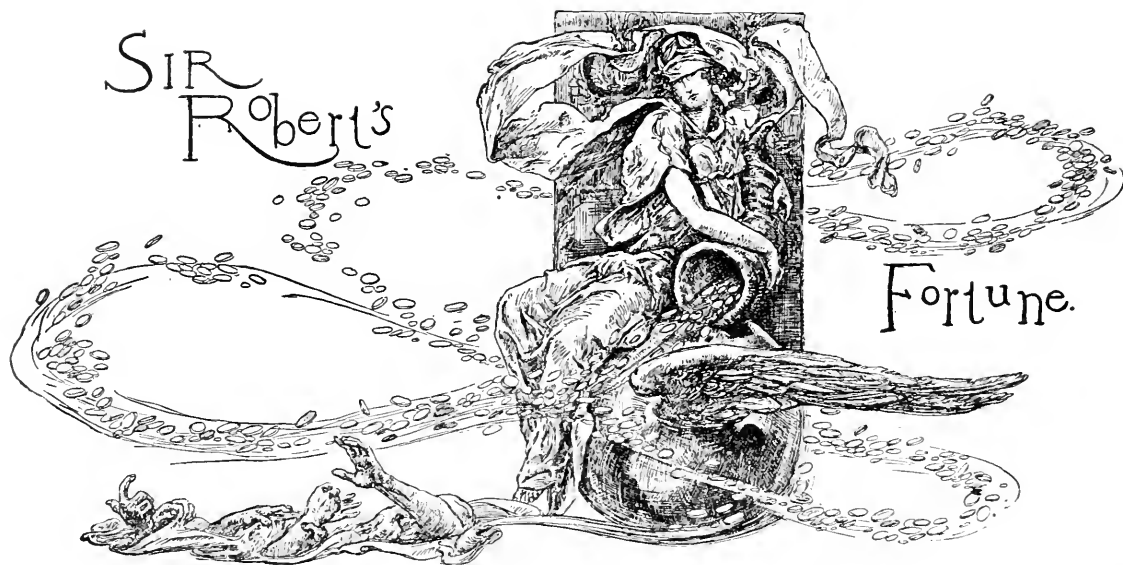
The happy Earth has won  
 For his young bride the spring,  
 Who smilingly draws on  
 His glistening emerald ring,  
 And larks go mounting up to heaven all day  
 Of Love's sweet passion piping all the way.

The trees and hedges old  
 Forget Time's sober flight,  
 And blithe of heart unfold  
 In delicate green and white ;  
 The herds and flocks go forth again to roam,  
 And each lost song-bird finds his native home.

O hark, my heart, to hear  
 The cuckoo's echoing call,  
 The gipsy of the year,  
 To every festival  
 Of love he goes in turn, nor tarries long,  
 Wild Nature's wandering troubadour of song.

WILL FOSTER.

F. & HASLERUST.



BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

PART I.

CHAPTER XXV.

HE had come back: he had come—could there be any doubt on that point?—to take his wife away; to take her home.

Lily, at least, in her own mind would admit of no doubt. She was transported in a moment from the depths to the heights. So much the more as it had been impossible yesterday to see any light, there was now such a flushing of the whole horizon that doubt was out of the question. She came towards the house with him with his arm round her, thinking of no precautions. Why should they conceal anything, this young pair? The man had come to take his wife away. When he withdrew his arm from her waist, and drew her hand through it, it did not, however, strike her that there was anything in that. It was more decorous, like old married people, no longer mere lad and lass. She walked proudly by his side, leaning on his arm. Who cared if Sir Robert himself were there to see? Lily had never cared much for Sir Robert, had always been ready to defy him, and vindicate her rights over her own life. As it happened there was nobody but Katrin standing at the door, looking out with her hand over her eyes. Katrin was very quick to make believe that she was dazzled by any little bit of light.

And the lonely moor lighted up and became as Paradise to Lily. He brought her all kinds of news, besides the best news of all, which was to see him there. He brought back her old world to her—the world where she had been so happy and so full of friends; her new world, where so soon, in a day or two, she was to find her young companions again, and resume the former life more cordial, more kind, more full of friendship and every gentle affection than ever.

While he sat there thawing, expanding, shaking the cold from him, Lily, who a little while ago had been the fastidious little maiden, courted and served, began to move about the room serving him, eager to get everything for him he wanted, to undo his muffler, to bring him his slippers. Yes, she would have liked to bring him his slippers as she brought him, like a housemaid, on a little silver salver—not a cup of tea, which probably Ronald would not have appreciated—but something stronger, “to keep out the cauld,” which Katrin recommended and brought upstairs with her own hands to the drawing-room door. “You are not going to serve me, my Lily?” Ronald said. “But I am just going to serve you, she cried, with a little stamp of her foot, “and who has a better right? and who should wait on my man but me that am bound to take care of him? and him come to take me away.”



Was she afraid to say these words loud out lest they should break the spell? or was he afraid that she might say them and he not be able to ignore them? But between them something was thrown down, a noise was made in which they were inaudible. I do not know if Lily had any little tremor that made her avoid explanation that evening: at all events she had a sort of hunger to be happy, to enjoy it to the utmost. She laid the table with her own hands, shutting the door in the face of the astonished Robina, who hurried up, as soon as she came in, to have her share. "I can do without you for all so grand as you think yourself," Lily cried, "I am just going to wait upon my own man."

"Oh, Miss Lily," cried Beenie terrified: but she added to herself, "What a good thing there's naebody in the house! Dougal will not be in till it's late, and most likely he'll be fou when he comes—and be nane the wiser. And naething will need to be said." I cannot tell whether Katrin made quite the same explanation to herself: but she had taken her precautions in case that should happen to Dougal which happened in these days to many honest men on a market night, without much infringement of their character for sobriety. It would make the explanation much simpler about the gentleman upstairs. In short, it would not be necessary to make any explanation at all.

"Get out the boxes, Beenie," said Lily, at a later hour, "do not make any fuss or have things lying about, for gentlemen, you know, cannot endure that: but just prepare quietly, without any fuss."

"Oh, Miss Lily! do you think it has come to that?" Beenie cried, clasping her hands, with a start of joyful surprise, but with a countenance full of doubt.

"And what else should it come to?" cried Lily, radiant. "Is this what folk are married for, to live one in Edinburgh, and one up far in the Hiellands? And what should my man come for but to take me home?"

She must have believed it or she would not have said it with such boldness. She gave Beenie a shake and then a kiss, but cried, "Don't make a confusion, don't leave the things lying about, for that is what gentlemen cannot endure," as she ran away to rejoin her husband. Robina stood immovable, looking after her, "Who has learnt her that?"

she said to herself; and then she began to shake her head. "They soon, soon learn what a gentleman canna bide: and set him up! that he should not bide anything coming from her!" But Beenie did not bring out any boxes. She concluded that at all events it would be time enough for that to-morrow.

Ronald remained for three or four days, during which time Dougal, who had carried out the judicious previsions of the women, and had required no explanations of any kind on the market night, maintained a very sullen countenance and did not welcome the visitor, of whom he was suspicious without well knowing why. During this time there was scarcely any pretence kept up of sending Ronald off to the cottage of Tam Robison or in any way making a stranger of him. He was "the young leddy's freend." "Young leddies had nae sic freends in my time," said Dougal. "They have aye had them in my time," said Katrin, "and that cannot be far different." He did not know what to say; but he was very glum and open to no blandishments on the part of the stranger. And those were days of anxious happiness for Lily. He said nothing upon that one sole object which she longed to know of. He sounded no note of freedom amid all the litanies he sang to her about her own sweetness, her beauty, her kindness. Lily grew sick of hearing her own praises. "Oh, if he would but say I was an ugly, troublesome thing! and then say, 'You must be ready, Lily, for we're going home to-morrow!'" But Lily was very sweet to her husband: this short visit was full of delight to him: he loved to look at her, to take her in his arms, to know she was his. Going away from her was hard to bear. He would have bemoaned his very hard case if he had not feared that she would beseech him to put an end to it, to take her away with him, and that it need be hard no longer. That was not what he wanted. He preferred the moments of rapture and the separations between. At least he preferred them to the loss of many other things which would be otherwise involved.

One day they went down to the Manse, Lily riding upon Rory, and her husband walking by her side. "You can say I have just come over for the day," he said. "The minister of course knows very well, but your friend, Miss Helen—"

"Why should we tell lies about it, Ronald? Isn't it very easy, very easy to understand?"

"Oh, yes," he said, "in any case it's easy to understand: but we might as well avoid gossip if we could."

"There would be no gossip," cried Lily, "about a man coming to see his wife! The only thing would be that folk would wonder why he did not take her home."

"Folk would wonder about something, you may be sure: but I've noticed that ladies think less of that than men. You think it is natural that people's minds should be occupied with you, my bonnie Lily. And so it is: but not with a common man. Maybe it is the jealousy that's in human nature. I hate the chance of it, you see!"

He spoke with a little vehemence, and Lily's eyes filled with tears. It was almost approaching the border of a first quarrel. "You and me," she said, plaintively, "though I would not have believed it, Ronald—do not always think the same."

"Did we ever think the same? No, Lily. But so long as we feel the same: and it's best to be on the safe side. I'll say I have come over for the day from—what do you call that place?—Ardenlennie, on the other side, where I had to see Sir John's man of business—which is true. And I found you coming out to pay your visit and came with you. Will that do?"

"Oh, it will do as well as any other—false story," said Lily, "if we are to go on telling lies all our days!"

"Not all our days, I hope," he said, gently. He was very good to her. No lover could have been more devoted to her service, with no eyes or ears but for her. That ride, though Lily was not happy in the depths of her heart, though she was fretted almost beyond endurance, was yet sweet to her, in spite of herself. "Do you mind how we careered along that other day, me riding, you running," he said, "pushing at Rory behind, and pulling him before—and the poor little beast astonished with the weight on him of a long-legged chield instead of a bonnie lady. My Lily, what you did for me that day! What should I have done without you—at that or any other time?"

"You have to do without me—not that I think I am much good—when you go away."

"Come," he said, "you must not harp for ever on this going away. Hallo!" he added, immedi-

ately, retiring from her side with a sudden impulse as if some hand had pushed him away, "there is a man I know."

"A man you know!" she cried, startled, not so much by this intimation as by the start it produced in him.

"Not a very creditable acquaintance," he went on, with a short laugh, dropping Rory's bridle and keeping, as Lily remarked with a pang, quite apart from her. "I thought he had been at the other end of the world. He is Alick Duff, one of the Duffs of Blackscaur. They were once the great people up here: but the present laird, I believe, is never at home. You might ride on while I say a word to him. He's not an acquaintance for you."

Rory, however, at this moment did not show any inclination to quicken his pace, and Lily heard the greeting between the two men. "Hallo, Lumsden, is that you?" and "Duff! I thought you were at the other end of the world!"

"Well, no, here I am—no in such clover as you," said the new-comer with a rough laugh. "Present me to the lady, Ronnie—Miss Ramsay, I'm sure."

"This is Mr. Alick Duff—Miss Ramsay," Lumsden said, with a dark colour on his face. "We are going the same way."

"And I'm going the contrary road—I'm sorry," said the stranger, who was a heavy man, older and far less well looking than Ronald. "I'm going to have a look at the old place and see if they'll have anything to say to me there. Then I'm off again to the ends of the world as you say: and the further the better," he added, again with a harsh laugh. Rory by this time had moved on, and Lily, though she heard the men's voices almost loud on the still air, did not make out what they said. In a few moments Ronald rejoined her, almost out of breath.

"That's the black sheep of the family," he said, "not likely he'll get much of a reception at home, even if there's anybody there. The only thing that could be wished, for all belonging to him, is that he should never be heard of more."

"He is a dreadful-looking man," said Lily, with a shudder, "and seems to laugh at everything, and looks as if he might do any terrible thing."

"You should ask Helen Blythe about that," Ronald said. He was still keeping at a certain distance, the other wayfarer being still in sight.

Ronald did not know that, when at the sudden turn of the next corner he resumed his place at Rory's bridle, it was almost in the heart of his wife to have pushed him back with her hands. This incident stopped the question about Helen Blythe which was trembling on Lily's lips. What could he know about Helen Blythe, and what could she have to do with this dreadful man?

The minister sat in his big chair as usual, immovable, by the fire, with a keen glance at Ronald and another at Lily as they came in. Lily was a little flushed with the fresh air and exercise, and with the associations of the place, and the sense that to one person here at least her secret was known. She would not take upon herself a syllable of the explanation which Ronald hastened to give fluently over her shoulder. "I am up at Ardenlennie, on business with Sir John's factor," he said, "and I was so fortunate as to find Miss Ramsay just setting out on a visit to you—so I thought I might come too."

"You're welcome," said the minister, curtly. "Come in to the fire, my dear young lady, and take a seat here."

"Eh, Lily, my dear," cried Helen, "I am feared you are not well—for you've turned white in a moment, after that bonnie colour you had!" Helen herself was not looking well. There was a little redness in her eyes as if she had been crying, and her cheeks were still paler than Lily's. She was interrupted by her father's preceptory voice:

"If you would but let your friends be! Sit down here and rest. No doubt ye're both tired and cold. And Eelen, if you had any sense, you would get the tea."

"That's one word for you, Lily, and two for himself," said Helen, with a smile. "He's as fond of his tea as if he were an old woman. I will just tell Marget and come back in a moment." Perhaps she was glad to be out of sight, even for that moment: but poor Lily, wholly occupied with her own concerns, and wondering whether Helen knew anything, or how much she knew, or what she would think of this dreadful deception—had no leisure in her mind to think of any possible troubles of Helen's own.

"Did you meet any—waif characters on the road?" the minister said, with a bitter pause before the last words to give emphasis. It was said loud enough for Helen to hear.

"We met—Alick Duff: I thought he was in Australia or America. He is not precisely what one would call a—fine character," Lumsden said.

"There are not very many of them about," said the old man, "some take one turn and some another: but them that stick to the straight road are few, as was said on a—more important occasion. And how will you be liking your stay in Dalrugas, Miss Lily, after all the daffing of the new year is over? A visitor for a day or so maybe makes it bearable: but it's lonely for the like of you."

"Oh," cried Lily, involuntarily putting her hands together, "I get very tired of it! But I think," she added, with a confidence she was far from feeling, "that I shall not be very long there now."

"Oh! ye think ye will not be very long there?" he repeated after her. There was not very great assurance or encouragement in his voice.

"Well," said Helen, who had come back, "I understand it's dull for you: but here is one person that will be very sorry, Lily. It will, maybe, be better for you, but the whole countryside will miss you: for many a one takes pleasure to see you pass—you and the powny—that never have said a word to you. She is just a public benefit," said the minister's daughter, "with her bonnie face."

A silence ensued, nobody said a word: and it became visible that Helen's cheeks were a little glazed, as if by sudden application of cold water to wash away certain stains from her eyes. She had seated herself for a moment where all the light from the window fell on her: but restlessly jumped up again and began to remove her work and some books from the table in preparation for tea. "And when are you leaving this neighbourhood, Mr. Lumsden? I hope you have some time to stay."

"Alas! I am going to-morrow. A man who has his work to do has little leisure," said Ronald. "We must keep our noses to the grindstone whatever happens. Ladies are better off."

"Do you think we are better off?" said Helen, with a sigh, "to hide at home whatever happens, and wait for news that, maybe, never comes; to see the others go away, and never be able to follow them, except with the longings of our hearts. I have had two brothers," she said, with a sudden little catch in her throat.

"Eelen," said the minister, "I never knew you for a hypocrite whatever you were. It is none of your brothers"—

"Oh, father, how can you ken? Do I wear my heart on my sleeve that you can tell what's in it? You never thought much about them yourself, and how could you know what was in another's heart? But it's not for me to speak. I have aye my duty. It's just Mr. Lumsden's notion that it's a fine thing for us to sit quiet at home and endure all things and never hear."

"Well, here is your tea at all events," said Mr. Blythe, "and I see James Douglas passing the window to get a cup. When there's nothing to do in an afternoon and everything low, as it is at that period in the day, there is a great diversion in tea. In fact," he added, "the best of meals is just the diversion they make. You are shaken out of yourself. Ye say your grace and ye carve your chuckie, or even a sheep's head on occasion, and your thoughts are taken clean away from the channel, maybe a troublesome one, that they are in. Still better is a cup of tea. Come ben, come ben, Mr. Douglas, there's plenty of room for you. We were just thinking, Eelen and me, that it is a long time since you have been here."

A pleasant light shone in the young minister's face. "If I thought I could make myself missed, I would have the heart to stay away longer still," he said, "but then I think that out of sight is often out of mind."

It was pathetic to observe how he sought the eyes of Helen, and how he contrived to put his chair next hers at the table, round which they all sat. Helen took but little notice of the gentle young man; she set down his cup before him with a precipitation that was almost rude, and turned away to Lily, with whom she talked in an undertone. What about? Neither one nor the other knew. Yet neither one nor the other had any perception of what was in her neighbour's bosom. Helen's trouble to her filled all the world. It was greater than anything else she knew: the air tingled with it; the very horizon could scarcely contain it. Lily, a child, with all the world smiling upon her! What could there be in her lot to approach the greatness of the pain which Helen had to bear? She was half angry with the girl for making a fuss about being dull, as if that mattered; or seeing her sweetheart only by intervals, which was all, she thought, that Lily had to complain of. The little spoiled child! but what a real heartbreak was Helen knew.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

"Did you mean that, Ronald?—that you are really going away to-morrow?"

"Indeed and alas, I meant it, Lily. It is the middle of the Session; how could I stay longer? It was as I said to the minister—though you never more than half believe what I say—a real piece of business with Sir John's factor, at Ardenlennie, that gave me the occasion of spending a few days with my Lily—which I seized upon without giving you any warning, as you know."

"And me that thought you could not do without me one day longer, and were coming hurrying to bring your wife home!"

"My darling!" said Ronald, with no lack of ardour on his part, "but then, my bonnie Lily has always sense to know that the longing of the heart changes nothing, and that it is no more the term in March than it is in January. Where could I find a place to put you now—or till Whitsunday comes?"

Was it true? Oh, yes, it was true. In Scotland you do not find an empty house and go into it whenever you want it—especially not in the Scotland of those days. You have to wait for the term, which is the legitimate time. Nevertheless, Lily was very sure that, if she were now in Edinburgh looking for a place to establish her nest in, she would find it; but perhaps a man has not the time, perhaps he cannot take the trouble, going upstairs and downstairs looking at all kinds of unlikely places. This, Lily felt sure, was another of the things that gentlemen could not abide.

"We must make the best of you, then, while we have you," she said, drawing her chair to the side of the fire after their dinner together. It was cold at night, though the hardy folk of the North were content to believe that spring was coming, and that there was a different "feel" in the air. The wind was sweeping over the moor as keen as a knife, bending the grey bushes of the ling and spare rowan trees that cowered before it like human travellers caught in the cutting breeze. There was a cold moon shining fitfully, with frightened, swift-flying glimpses from among the clouds, which flew over her face: colder than the depth of winter outside, but within, with the firelight and the lamplight, and Lily making the best of her husband's flying visit, very bright and very warm.

"I will just look for the next term, Ronald: and pack up all my things, and be ready, so that if you came suddenly, as you did the other day"——

"Do you bid me, then," he said, "not to come till Whitsunday? which is a long time to be without a sight of my Lily. If I should have another chance like this of getting a day or two—which is better than nothing"——

"Oh, no, do not miss the day or two," cried Lily, "how could you think I meant that? But I'll look for the term time, like the maids when they're changing their places. It's more than that to me, for it will be the first home I have ever had. Uncle Robert's house was never a home—there was no woman in it."

"Nor will there be any woman, Lily."

"I will be the woman," she cried, with a playful blow on his shoulder; "it is me that will make it home. And you will be the man: and if any stranger comes into it—not to say a poor, motherless bairn like what I was—their hearts will sing for pleasure: for there will be one for kindness and warmth, and one for protecting and caring, and that will make it home. Uncle Robert was but one, and not one that was caring. If you were there, he just let you be. 'Oh,' he would say, 'you are here!' as if it was a surprise. Do you wonder that I hunger and thirst for my own home, Ronald, when I never had in my life anything but that?"

"It will come in its time, my Lily," he said, holding her close to him, with her hands in his.

"Ay, but you mind what Shakespeare says: 'While the grass grows' "——

"If the proverb was musty then," said Ronald, with a laugh, "it's mustier now."

"So it is: but as true as ever. And I weary for it, I weary for it!" cried the girl. "However, sit you there, and me here; and we'll think it is our own house—that you will have come in, and you will have had your dinner, and you will be telling me everything that has passed in the day."

"What, all the pleas before the Fifteen, and old Watty's speeches, and the jokes of Johnny Law, and the wiles of"——

"Every one of them! When you are in a profession, you should know everything about it. If you were a—tailor, say, who would make your fine buttonholes, and the braiding of the grand waist-

coats, but your wife? Or a—schoolmaster; it would be me to look after the exercises: and wherefore not an advocate's wife to know all about the Parliament House, and how to conduct a case?—if there should be occasion."

"So that you might go down to the court instead of me, and plead for me if I had a headache," said Ronald, laughing. "It would be grand for my clients, Lily, for I'll answer for it, with Symington on the bench, and Hoodiecrow and the two Elders, you would gain every plea."

"That's while I am young and—" said Lily, with a little toss of her head. She was saucy and gay and full of malice, as he had never seen her, for this was not much Lily's way. "I did not say I would plead: but I would have to know. Everything you would have to tell me, as well as the jokes of the old lords."

"Well," said Ronald, "I might do that, and you would take no harm, for you would not understand them, my Lily. But they all like a bonnie lass, and you would win every plea. I'll tell you all the stories, Lily, and there are plenty of them. The plainstones of the Parliament House know more human trouble and vice than any other place in Edinburgh. I'll tell you—"

"Oh, not the wicked things!" cried Lily, clasp- ing her hands, "for how could we help those that suffer by them? or what could that have to do with you and me?"

"If you leave out the wicked things there would be little to do," said Ronald, "for the courts of law."

"But we will leave them out," cried Lily. "All our cases shall be about mistakes, or something that comes from not understanding: so that as soon as you put it to them very clear they will see the right and own it and go back to the just way. For there is nobody that would not rather be in the right than in the wrong if they knew, and that is my principle: things are so twisted in and out, it's hard to understand: and bad advice and thinking too much of himself makes a man do a sudden thing without thinking, till he finds that it is wrong. And then when he sees, he is sorry and puts it back."

"If it were so easy as all that, Lily, it would be new heavens and a new earth."

"Well, we'll try," said Lily, gaily. She was so gay, she was so full of quips and cranks, so ready with

amusing turns of speech and audacious propositions, that Ronald found her a new Lily, full of brightness and fun and novel ridiculous suggestions and high-flown notions, which she was ready herself to laugh at as high-flown, yet taking his sober thoughts to pieces and turning them upside down. What would it be indeed to carry her away with him, to have her always there, turning every little misfortune into fun and laughter, making every misadventure a source of amusement instead of trouble! A gleam of light rose in his eyes, and then he shook his head slightly to himself and sighed. The shake of the head and the sigh were when Lily's back was turned. He dared not let her see them, divine them, answer them with a hundred quick-flashing arguments. She had an answer for everything, he knew. She cared nothing for the things that were, after all, the chief things to care for—money, progress in the world, that sound foundation in life without which no man could make sure of rising to the head of his profession. Some did it without doubt. There was Lord Pleasance, that had fought his way to the bench, marrying a wife and beginning in a garret, as Lily wished: now he thought of it, she was something like Lily, the Judge's wife, though fat now and roundabout. They had even been Lord Advocate in their time, and gone to London (with such a couple, even Ronald felt instinctively, you don't say he but they) and struggled through somehow: but always poor, always poor! They did not seem to mind: but then Ronald knew that he would always mind. They had no fortunes for their daughters nor to put out their sons well in the world. He shook his head again as he rejected once more that possibility which for a moment, only for a moment, had caught and almost beguiled him. Lily had gone out of the room, but coming back, caught that last shake of his head.

"And what is that for?" she said, "you will have been thinking that Lily is good for very little, that she could not keep the house and make the meat as she thinks, but would look to be served herself, hand and foot, as she is here."

"Not that—but still, my Lily has always been served hand and foot. There is Beenie, without whom we cannot budge a step—"

"No," said Lily, gravely, "without Beenie I could not budge a step—not because Beenie is

my maid, and I need her to serve me, but because it would break her heart."

"My love, poor folk as we shall be, cannot afford to think of breaking hearts."

"I will break yours rather," cried Lily, with a little stamp of her foot. "I will give ye ill dinners and a house that is never redd up, and keep Beenie like a lady in the best room and give her all the good things."

"That is just what I say," said Ronald, "we will have a train—all the old servants that cannot endure their lives without Miss Lily—perhaps Katrin and Dougal too."

Lily stood looking at him for a moment, with her eyes enlarged and her face pale. "Is it in fun, or in earnest?" she said, with a little gasp.

"Oh, in fun, in fun," he said, hastily, "though considering how they have fulfilled their duty to Sir Robert, it would not be strange if he turned them out of his doors—and whom, then, could they turn to but you and me?"

"It is not for you and me to blame them," said Lily, still under the impression of what he had said, "and this is not the kind of fun that is good fun. But it is true, after all, though I never thought of that before. Katrin is kind, but she has, perhaps, not been quite as true to Uncle Robert as to me—but Dougal, he knows nothing. Dougal has never known anything, he has never meant to desert Uncle Robert. Ronald," cried Lily, with sudden affright, "We have all been cheating Uncle Robert! This is what we have done, and nothing else, since you first came here."

"I am well aware of it, Lily," said Ronald, with a laugh, "and for my part I am quite agreed to go on cheating Uncle Robert for as long as you please."

"It does not please me," she said, "I would like to cheat nobody. It is a new thing to me, I did not think of that. Oh, Ronald, take me away! I laugh and I chatter, but my heart's breaking. We are cheating everybody—not Uncle Robert only, but Helen Blythe and every creature that knows me. What do I care how poor we are, or if I have to work for my living? I will work, oh, with a good heart! but take me away, take me away!"

Ronald held her hands in his and steadied her against her will. He had foreseen such an outburst, as well as the other manifestations of her

agitated and disturbed life. He was ready to allow even that it was no wonder she became excited by times, that she had been more patient than he could have hoped. He was himself very cool, and could afford to be moderate and humour her. He held her hands in his, and restrained the violence of her feelings by that steady clasp. "My Lily, my Lily," he said. The girl yielded to that restraining influence in spite of herself. She could almost have struck him, in the vehemence of her passion and in the intolerable sensation of this sharp light upon the situation altogether: but the cool touch of his hands, his firm hold, his soothing voice subdued her. The question between two people at such a crisis is almost entirely the question which is stronger, and on this occasion Ronald was certainly the stronger. When Lily's passion ended in the natural flood of tears, she shed them on his shoulder, encircled by his arm, all her resistance quenched. And he was very kind to her: no one could have consoled her more lovingly, or more tenderly soothed the nervous and excited feelings which had got beyond her control. He was master of the situation, and felt it, but used his power in the most gentle way. And Lily said not a word more—what was there to be said? She had put herself in the wrong by her passion and by her tears. This was not the calm reason with which a woman ought to discuss the beginning of her life—with which, she said to herself, a man expected his wife to consider and discuss these affairs. She had neither been calm nor reasonable. She had been passionate, excited, perhaps hysterical. Lily was deeply ashamed of herself. She was humble towards him who must, she thought, be disappointed in her, and find her like the women in books, all folly and excitement, instead of a creature able to take all the circumstances into consideration. Nothing could have subdued her spirits like that sense of being in the wrong.

Later in the evening she endeavoured to make up for her foolishness by returning to the mood of gaiety, with which she began the evening. She gave Ronald a little sketch of the humours of Rory, and the respect in which Dougal held that small and fiery personage. She told him about Katrin's cows and her chickens, and the amusement which these living creatures had given during the long winter days to the little family at Dalrugas.

"But spring is coming," he said.

"Oh yes, spring is coming: the moor will soon be dry enough for walking, and many a ramble I will have. I am beginning," said Lily, "to grow very fond of the moor: you see it is all we have. It's cross, and market, and college, and court and altogether to me. In the morning the bees will be busy among the whins—there is always a bud somewhere on a whin bush, and full of honey as they can hold: and then in the evening there is the sunset and the hills all standing out against the west, with their old purple cloaks around them. What with the barnyard and what with the moor, there's no want of diversion here."

"My bonnie Lily," he cried, in sudden compunction, "not much diversion for the like of you."

"What do you call the like of me? I am very well off. I have neighbours and all. There is Helen Blythe, poor thing, she is not so well off. The minister is a handful, he holds her night and day. And who was yon glum man, Ronald, and what had he to do with her? Her eyes were red, and she had been crying: and I am sure it was something about that man."

"Alick Duff? Nonsense, Lily! He is a black sheep if ever there was one. That was all a foolish story, we'll suppose. A good little thing like the minister's daughter should never be thrown away on him."

"Perhaps she is a good little thing. We are all good little things till we show ourselves different—but her eyes were red and her cheeks were pale. I must see if I can comfort her," said Lily, half to herself. "And now, sir, if you are going away to-morrow, you should go to your bed, for you'll have a weary day."

"Yes, I shall have a weary day: but I could bear that and more to see my Lily," Ronald said.

"Well, if you care for her at all you would need to do that, for she must either be there or here," Lily said. "It's a pity I'm solid, that I cannot fly away like the birds, and tap at your window as the lady does in the ballad. What ballad? I don't remember, perhaps it was after she was dead. And does Mrs. Buchanan always make you comfortable and cook as well as Katrin? Oh, Katrin is very good for some things, though you think her an ill housekeeper for Uncle Robert. But never mind that, tell me about Luckie Buchanan. I will wager you a silver bawbee, as Beenie says, that

she does not send you up your bird as good as we do here."

"Nothing is so good as it is here. You take me up too quick, Lily."

"Me take you up quick! I do nothing but try to please you—but I know how it is, Ronald. You think shame of Luckie Buchanan: she burns your bird, and she does your chop in the frying-pan, and her kettle is not half boiled. Young men are very badly treated in their lodgings. I know very well. Uncle Robert's men that came to see him were always complaining: and they were old men that could make their curries themselves and drive womenfolk desperate, whereas you're only young and would think shame to look as if you cared. I wonder if she brushes your clothes right: and gives you nice burnished boots as you like them to be," said Lily, with a critical look at the sleeve of his coat, which she was smoothing down with her hand.

"You will make me think myself a terrible being, taken up with my own wants," he said, in a vexed tone.

"It is me that am taken up with your wants," she said, "and what more right than that—a man's wife! What is the good of her but to look after her man! and when I cannot do it for failure of circumstances, not good will, then I must just ask and plague you till you tell me there's nothing more for me to do: till the term comes and I go home to my place," cried Lily, with a laugh, but with two tears, which she turned away her head that he might not see. "It's my first place," she cried, "you cannot wonder I am excited about it, Ronald: and I hope I will give you satisfaction—Beenie and me!"

Next morning Lily got up without, as appeared, any cloud on her face, and gave him his breakfast, and saw to the packing of his bag—and that his big coat was well strapped on to Sandy's shoulders, who was to walk into the town with him and carry his small belongings. "You will not want it walking, but you will want it in the coach," she said, "and be sure you keep yourself warm, for though it's March the wind is terrible cold over the moor: and here is a scarf to put round your neck for the night journey. It will keep you warm, and it will mind you of me."

"Do I want that to mind me of my Lily?" he said, reproachfully.

"No, after I have been giving you such a taste of my humours and you know I am not just the good thing you thought. But you might be more grateful for my bonnie scarf that I took out of the lavender to give you to wrap round your throat at night. And it is a very bonnie scarf," said Lily, "look at the flowers worked upon it the same on both sides, and as soft as a dove's feathers that are of silver. You will put it round your neck and say Lily gave me this: and then at Whitsunday, when I take up my place, I will find it again, laid away in some drawer: and I will take it back: and it will belong then both to you and me."

"That is a bargain," he said, more moved by the parting than he had ever been—but Lily went with him to the head of the stairs, and there stood looking after him from the stair-case window, to keep up some sort of transparent fiction for Dougal's sake, with her eyes shining and a smile upon her mouth. She was resolved that this was how he should see her when he went away. There should be no more breakings down. She would importune him no more. She would not shed a tear. When he turned round to wave his hand before he disappeared under the bank, she was still smiling and calm. It was, perhaps, a little startling to Ronald, who had never seen her so reasonable before—and reasonableness, though so desirable, is sometimes a little alarming too.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

WHEN she was sure that the travellers were out of sight, Lily flew down the spiral stairs, snatched her plaid from where it hung as she passed, and rushed out to the only shelter and refuge she had—the loneliness and silence of the moor. She had to push through between the two women, who would so fain have stopped her to administer their consolation and caresses, but whom, in her impatience, she could not tolerate, shaking her head as they called after her to put on her plaid, and that she would get her death of cold. It was March and a beautiful morning, the air almost soft in the broad beaming of the sun, and the moisture which lay heavy on the moss-green turf and ran and sparkled in little pools and currents everywhere: but the breeze was keen and cold, and blew upon her with a sharp and salutary chill, cooling her heated cheeks. Lily sprang over the great bushes



of the ling, which, bowed for a moment by her passage, flung back upon her a shower of dew-drops as they recovered their straightness: and the whins caught at the plaid on her arm as she brushed past: but she took no notice of these impediments, nor of the wetness under her feet, nor the chill of the air upon her uncovered head, and shoulders clothed only in her indoor dress. She paused upon a little green hillock slightly rising over the long level, which was a favourite point of vision, and from which, as she had often found, the furthest view was possible of anything within the horizon of this little world. But it was not to see that little speck on the road, which was Ronald, that Lily had made this rush into the heart of the moor. It was for the utter solitude, the silence which enclosed and surrounded her, the separation from everything that could intrude upon that little speck of herself, so insignificant in the great fresh shining world, yet so much more living in her trouble than all the mountains and the moors. Lily sank down on the mossy green and covered her face with her hands. She had shed passionate tears on her husband's shoulder last night, but these were different, which forced their way now without anything to restrain them. They were not mere tears of a parting which, after all, was no wonderful thing. He would come again. Lily had no fear that he would come again. She had no doubt of his love, no thought that he might grow cold to her. Of the two it was Ronald who was the warmest lover, holding her in perfect admiration as well as in all the fondness of a young husband, which was not exactly what could be said on her side. But his love was of a different kind, as perhaps a man's always is. He did not want all that she did in their marriage. A little house of their own, wherever it was—a home, a known and certain place. Was it the woman who thought of this rather than the man? It gave her a pang even to think that it might perhaps be so, or at least that Ronald did not care for what she might suffer in this respect. He might be content with casual visits, but what she wanted was her garret, her honest name, and honour and truth.

And then Whitsunday, Whitsunday, the term when people did their flitting, and the maids went to their new places! Oh happy, honest prose that had nothing to do, Lily thought, with romance or

poetry. Would it come—in two months, not much more—and make an end of all this? or would it never come? Poor Lily's heart was so wrung out of its right place that she lost her confidence even in the term: she could scarcely think of anything in earth or heaven, she who had once been so confident, of which she could now think that there was no fear.

By this time the cold had begun to creep to Lily's heart, her fever of excitement having found vent, and she was glad to wrap herself closely in her plaid, putting it over her head and gathering the soft folds round her throat. She put back the hair which the cold breeze and the disorder of her weeping had brought about her face, smoothing it back under the tartan screen, the soft warm folds that gave a little colour to her pale face. Oh, if she could have had a plaid, but that of Ronald's tartan, to wrap about her heart, the chilled spirit and soul that had no warmth of covering! But that must not be thought of now, when Lily's business was to go back to her dreary home, to meet the eyes that would be fixed upon her, to bear her burden worthily, and to betray to no one, even her most confidential companion, the doubts and terrors that were in her own heart.

As she came out upon the road, having made a long round of the moor to give herself more time, Lily perceived two figures in front of her, whom she did not at once recognise: but after a moment or two her attention was attracted by the voice of the man, who spoke loudly, and by something in the attitude of the little figure walking by his side, and replying sometimes in an inaudible monosyllable, sometimes by a deprecating gesture only to his vehement words. Was it Helen Blythe who was here so far from home by the side of a man who spoke to her almost roughly, certainly not as so gentle a creature ought ever to have been spoken to? It was some time before Lily's faculties were sufficiently roused to hear what he was saying, or, at least, to discover that she could hear if she gave her attention: when, however, a sudden "If you had ever loved me, Helen!" caught her ear, Lily cried out in alarm, "Oh whisht, whisht! Whoever you are, I am coming behind you and I can hear what you say."

The man turned round almost with rage, showing her the dark and clouded face of the stranger, whom she had met the day before with Ronald,

and who was the cause, as she had divined, of Helen's sad eyes. "Confound you," he cried, in his passion, "can ye not pass on, and leave the road free to folk going about their own business?" These words came out with a rush, and then he paused and reddened, and took off his hat. "Miss Ramsay!" he said, "I beg your pardon," placing himself hastily between her and his companion.

"I neither want to see nor hear," cried Lily, "let me pass, you need have no fear of me."

At the voice Helen came quietly out of his shadow. "You need not hide me from Lily," she said, "for Lily is my dear friend. I've walked far, far from home, Lily, with one that—one that—I may never see again," she said, turning a pathetic look upon the man by her side. "He blames me now, and perhaps I am to be blamed. But to think it is, maybe, the last time, as he is telling me, breaks my heart. Lily, will you take us in, if it was only for half an hour? I feel as if I could not go on another step, for my heart fails me as well as my feet."

"You never told me you were wearied, Helen," he cried, in a tone of fierce penitence, "how was I to know? I could have carried you like a feather."

She shook her head. "You could carry more weight than me, Alick, but as soon Schiehallion as me. And I was not wearied till I saw rest at hand."

"Miss Ramsay," he said, "you know what she and I are to each other."

"I know nothing," cried Lily, "and you need not tell me, for what Helen does is always right—but come in and welcome, and have your talk out in peace. Never mind to explain to me—I scarcely know your name."

"It is, alas, no credit—or rather I am no credit to a good name that has been well-kent on this country-side: but we are old, old friends, Helen Blythe and me. She should have been my wife, Miss Ramsay, though you might not think it, nearly ten long years ago. If she had kept her promise they would never have called me wild Alick Duff, and the black sheep of the family, as they do now. This is the third time I've come back to bid her keep her word: for I have her word, rough and careless as you may think me: each time I'm less worth taking than I was the time before, and I'm not going to risk it any more. When she drops me this time I will just go to the devil, which is the easiest way, and trouble nobody more about me."

"And why should you go to the devil?" said Lily, "for that is what nobody except your own self can make you do."

"Oh, do not hearken to him, Lily: let us come in for half-an-hour, for neither will my feet carry me, nor will my heart hold me up if there is more."

Lily made her guests enter before her when they reached the door of Dalrugas: but lingering behind as Helen made her way slowly with her tired steps up the spiral stairs, caught Duff by the sleeve and spoke in his ear: "Do you not think shame of yourself to break her heart, a little thing like that, with putting the weight of your ill-deeds upon her, and you a big strong man?"

"Me—think shame!" he said, with a low laugh.

"I would think shame," cried Lily, vehemently, all her hot blood surging up in her veins, "to lay the burden of a finger's weight upon her, and her not a half or a quarter so big as me!"

This sharp, indignant whisper Helen heard as a murmur behind her while she went up the stairs. She turned round when she reached the drawing-room, meeting the others as they appeared after her. "And what were you two saying to each other?" she asked, with a tremulous smile.

"I am going," said Lily, "to leave you to yourselves: and when you have had your talk out you will come down to me to have something to eat: and then we will think, Helen, how we are to get you home."

"You are coming in here, Lily. Him and me, we have said all there is to be said. And he has told you what there is between us, as perhaps I would never have had the courage to do. Come and tell him over again, Lily, you that are a young lass and have known no trouble—tell him what a woman can do and cannot do, for he will not believe me."

"How can I tell? that have known no trouble, as you say?" cried Lily. But Helen knew nothing to explain the keen tone of irony that was in the words, and looked at the girl with an appeal in her patient eyes, too full of her own sorrow to remember that, perhaps, this younger creature might have sorrows too. "How should I know?" said Lily, "what a woman cannot do? If it is to keep a man from wrong-doing, is that a woman's business, Helen? How do I know? They

say in books that it's the women that drive them to it. Are you to take him on your shoulders and carry him away from the gates of——or what are you expected to do?"

"If she had married me when I asked her," cried Duff, "she would have done that. Ay, that she would! From the gates of hell, that a little thing like you daren't name. I would never have known the way they lay if she had put her hand in mine and come with me. And that I have told you, Helen, a hundred times, and a hundred more."

"Oh, Alick! Alick!" was all that Helen said.

"And you never would have thought shame," cried Lily, "to ride by on her shoulders, instead of walking on your own feet? I would have set my face like a flint and passed them by, and scorned them that wiled me there! I would have laid it upon nobody but myself if I had not heart enough to save my own head!"

"Oh Lily, Lily!" cried Helen, turning upon her champion, "my bonnie dear! it's you that are too young to understand. Maybe he's wrong, but he's a kind of right, too. I am not blaming him for that. Many a woman keeps a man on the straight road, almost without knowing, and him no worse of it nor her either. I could tell you things! And Alick, I will not deceive you: if I had not been so young that time—if I had only had the courage—for there was no reason then, but just that I was a young lass, and frightened, and did not know. There was no reason—then——"

"Except that I was wild Alick Duff, that they said would settle to nothing, and not a man that would ever make salt to his kail."

Helen made no answer, but shook her head with a sigh.

"How can I stand between you and him," said Lily, "you take away my breath. I cannot understand the tongue you are speaking. It's not good English nor Scots either, but another language. Are we angels, to make men good? and is it no matter what evil thing a woman takes into her heart if she can but make her man look like a whited sepulchre, and keep him, as you say, on the straight road? Is that what we were made for?" she cried, in all the indignation of her youth.

Duff, a little surprised, a little confused by this unexpected controversy, too much occupied with

his own purpose not to be impatient with any digression, yet uncertain whether this strange digression might not serve his cause in the end, made answer, first fixing his eyes upon Lily, the little girl who knew no trouble, "I'm thinking that was a good part of it," he said. "You had the most to do with bringing ill into the world, you should have the most to do with driving it out. But what do I care about women?" he cried. "It's Helen I'm thinking of. There might never be such another, but there she is that could have done it, and would not lift her little finger. And now she will smile and send me away."

"He speaks," cried Lily, "as if it were your responsibility and not his—as if you would be answerable."

"Oh," said Helen, in a hurried undertone, "and that is what I lie and think upon in the watches of the night. Will the Lord demand an account at my hands? Will He say, 'Helen, where is thy brother?' I that was maybe appointed for him to be his keeper, to take care of him, with all his hot blood and all his fancies, that nobody understood but me."

Duff was walking impatiently about the room, not listening to what the two women spoke between themselves: and Lily was too much bewildered by this new view to make any answer, except by a brief exclamation: "It is like a coward to put the blame upon you."

"I would not shrink from it if I might bear it," said Helen. "It's not that. But to think it might be a man's ruin, that a poor frightened creature of a woman—no, a lassie, twenty years old, no more—could not see her duty. For there was no reason then. My mother was living, my father was a strong man. The boys had been unlucky, but me, I was free. And I let him go away. Oh, lay the wyte on me!" she said, clasping her hands. "Oh, lay the wyte on me!"

Duff came suddenly to a standstill before her, catching up something of what she said. "I'll forgive you all that's come and gone, and all that might have been, and the vows I've broken, and the little good I've ever done"—a tender light came over his dark face—"Helen, I'll forgive you all my ruin, and we'll gather up the fragments that are left, if you will but come with me now."

"Forgive her!" cried Lily, indignant.

"Ah, forgive her!—you that know nothing of

the heart of man. Can she ever give it back? She says herself the Lord will seek my blood at her hands: how much more me that knows what might have been and never has been because she was not there. But Helen, let it be now! It may be but the hinder end of life that's left: but better that than nothing at all. We are not so old yet, neither you nor me. And there's the fragments that remain—the fragments that remain." He held out his hands towards her, the face that Lily had thought so dark and forbidding melting in every line, the lowering brows lifted, the fierce eyes softened with moisture. And Helen looked up at him, with her own overflowing and a light as of martyrdom on her face.

"Oh, Alick, my father, my father! I cannot leave my father now."

He kicked away a footstool on the carpet, with a sudden movement which, to Lily, at first appeared as if he were offering violence to Helen herself. "Your father!" he cried, "the minister that will have no broken man for his daughter, nor ill-name for his house—that wants the sill of them that come to woo—that would sell you away to that white-faced lad because he has something to the fore, and a respectable name. Oh, don't speak to me of your father, Helen Blythe, him that should be all spirit and that's all flesh! Confound him and you and all your sleekit ways! In what way is he better than me?"

"Man! you will kill her!" cried Lily, springing forward and putting herself between them. "How dare you swear at her, that is far, far too good for you!"

But Helen was not horrified, like Lily. She looked at him still, bending her head to the other side. "My father," she said, "has his faults, like us all. He is a mixture, as you are yourself. I am not angry at what you say. He likes his pleasure as you do, Alick. He is more moderate: he is a minister. He has not, maybe, been tempted like you: but I allow that it is not far different. Perhaps in the sight of God——" but here her voice failed her, suddenly interrupted by something deeper than tears.

"He likes his pleasure," said Duff, with a short laugh, "he likes a good glass of wine, not to say whiskey, and a good dinner, and tells his stories, and is no more particular when he's with his cronies, than me. Only I'll tell you what he does,

Helen, that me, I cannot do. Would he have had it in him, if he had not been a minister, nor had a wife, nor been kept from temptation? That is what none of us can tell. He knows when to stop; he likes himself better than his pleasures. He keeps the string about his neck and stops himself when he's gone far enough. I do not esteem that quality," cried the big man, striding about the room, making the boards groan and creak. "I am not fond of calculation. Alick Duff has cost me many a sore head and many a sore heart. I scorn him," he cried, with a strong churning out of the fierce letters that make up that word, "both for what he's done and what he hasn't done. But it's no for him I would draw bridle if I were away in full career. But I would for you!" he said, suddenly sinking his voice, and throwing himself in a chair that swung and rocked under him, by Helen's side. "Helen, I would for you!"

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

LILY had an agitating and troubled day between this strange pair, who had the good effect upon her, however, of turning her thoughts entirely away from her own affairs, the struggle and trouble of which seemed of so little importance beside this conflict which had the air of being for life or death. She did not understand either of the combatants: the man who so fearlessly owned his weaknesses, and put the weight of his soul upon the woman who ought to have saved him: or the woman who did not deny that responsibility, nor claim independence or a right irrespective of him to follow her own way. Helen Blythe had ideas of life, it was evident, very different from those that had ever come into Lily's mind. In those days there were no discussions of women's rights: but in those days, alas! as in all other periods, the heart of a high-spirited young woman here and there swelled high with imagination, wrath, and indignation at the thought of those indignities which all women had to suffer. That it should be taken as a simple thing that any man, after he had gone through all the soils and degradations of a reckless life, should have a spotless girl given to him to make him a new existence, was one of those

bitter thoughts that rankled in the minds of many women, though nothing was said on the subject in public, and very little even among themselves. For those were subjects which girls shrank from and blushed to hear of. The knowledge was horrible and made them feel, when any chance fact came their way, as if their very souls were soiled by the hearing. Not that the elder women—especially those inconceivably experienced and impartial old ladies of society, who see everything with the sharpest eyesight, and discuss everything with words that cut and glance like steel, and who have surmounted all that belongs to sex, except a keen dramatic interest in its problems—did not talk of these matters after their kind, as in all the ages. But the girls were not told, they did not know, they shrank from information which they would not have understood had it been conveyed to them: except, indeed, a few principles that were broad and general, that to marry a girl to an old man or a wicked man, was a hideous thing, and that the old doctrine of a reformed rake, which had been preached to their mothers, was a scorn to womankind, and no longer to be suggested to them. For the magic of the Pamelas was over, and Sir Walter had arisen in the sky, which cleared before him, all noisome things flying where he made his honest, noble way. Not much these heroes of his, people say, not worth a Tom Jones with his stress and storm of life: but bringing in a new era, the young and pure with the young and true, and not a white-washed Lovelace in the whole collection. Lily was of Scott's age: and when she saw this wolf approaching the lamb, or rather, this black sheep as everybody called him, demanding a maiden sacrifice to clean him from his guilt, her heart burned with indignation and the rage of innocence. She could not understand Helen's strange acquiescence, nor her sense of possible guilt in not having accepted that part which was offered to her. The very atmosphere which surrounded Duff was obnoxious to Lily: the roughness of his tones and his clothes, his large noisy movements and vehemence and gesture. He had lost, she thought, that air of a gentleman which is the last thing a man loses who is born to it and never, as she believed, loses innocently.

She was glad beyond description when, after much more conversation, and a meal to which his excitement and passion did not prevent him from doing

a certain justice, Duff was got out of the house, leaving Helen behind, for whom the cart with the black pony had to be brought out once more. Helen was greatly exhausted by all the agitations of the day. He had left her without bringing her to any change of mind, yet vowing he would see her once again and make her come with him still; that he would not yet abandon all hope; while she sat tired out, shaking her head softly with a melancholy smile on her face—a smile more pitiful than many complaints. She did not rise from her chair to see him go away, but followed him with wistful eyes to the door—eyes that were full of a dew of pain that flooded them, but did not fall. She did not say anything for a long time after he had gone. Was she listening to his steps as he went away, leaving on the air a lingering sound, measured and heavy? Helen had thought that footstep like music: she had watched for it many a day and heard it, as she thought, miles off, in the stillness of the long country roads, and again, in imagination, many and many a day when he was far out of hearing. She heard it now, long after it had been lost by every ear but her own. Her face had a strained look as if that sound drew her after him, yet stronger resolution kept her behind.

"You did not mean that, Helen, oh, not that!" Lily said, encircling her friend with her arm.

"My bonnie Lily! but that I did, with all my heart!"

"That you, a good woman, would go away out into the world with an ill man—knowing he was an ill man—and thinking that you could turn him and mend him! Oh, Helen, Helen! take him to your heart that is pure as snow, knowing he was an ill man?"

"Lily, you are very young—you are little more than a bairn. What are our small degrees of good and ill—or rather, of ill and worse—before our Maker? Do you think He judges as we judge? They say my poor Alick is wild, and well I wot he is wild, and has taken many, many a wrong step on the road. Oh, if you think it presumptuous of me to believe I could have held him fast so that he should not fall!—that would be more true. But Lily, if ye were long in this countryside you would see it with your own e'en. The women long ago were not so feared as we were. They just married the lad they liked, and if he were wild forgave him: and I've known goodwives that

have just pushed them through—oh, just pushed them through!—till they came to old age with honour on their heads and a fine family about them, that would have sunk into the miry pit and the horrible clay, if the woman had not had the heart to do it. I am not saying I had not the heart," said Helen, with a melancholy shake of her head, "but I was young and knew nothing, and the moment passed away."

"It can never be right," cried Lily, "to run such a dreadful risk. Oh, if they cannot guide themselves, who are we that we should guide them? I am not like you, Helen. I know for myself I could guide no man."

No! well she knew that! Not so much as for the taking of a little house—not so much as the simplest duty as ever lay in a man's road. Helen was not so clever as Lily, she had no such pretensions in any way—everything, blood and breeding, and the habit of carrying out her own projects, and holding her head high, was in the favour of the younger. But Lily had no such confidence as Helen. She did not believe in any influence she could exert. Her opinion, her entreaties, were of no use. They did not move Ronald. He dismissed them with a kiss and a smile. "I could guide no man," she repeated, with a bitter conviction in her heart.

"It would, maybe, not be a perfect life," said Helen, "far from that: there would be many an ill moment. The goodwife has her cross to carry, and it's not light: but oh, Lily, better that than ruin to the man, and a lonely life, with little use in it, to *her*: and there is aye the hope of the bairns that will do better another day."

"The bairns," said Lily, "that would be the worst of all. An ill man's bairns—to carry on the poison in the blood."

"You are a hard judge," said Helen, pausing to look at her, "for one so young: but it's because you are so young, my bonnie dear. We are all ill men and women, too. There's a line of poetry that comes into my head, though it's a light thing for such a heavy subject, and I cannot mind it exact to a word. It says we were all forfeit once, but He that might have best took the advantage found out the remedy. It is bonnier than that, and it is just the truth. The Lord said, 'Neither do I condemn thee.' Ye will mind that at least, Lily."

"I mind them both," cried Lily, piqued to have her knowledge doubted, "but yet——"

"And you must not speak of my poor Alick as an ill man. Oh, if I could but let you see how little he is an ill man! His heart is just as innocent as a bairn's, in some things—I'm not saying in all things. He is wild, poor lad, the Lord forgive him! He does a foolish thing and then he thinks after that he shouldn't have done it. If I were there I would make him think first, I would think for him: and then, if the thing was done, there would be me to try to mend it and him, too. But why should I speak as if that was in my power?" cried Helen, with a sudden soft momentary rush of tears, "for I cannot, I cannot go with Alick and leave my father! I will have to stand by and see my poor lad go out again without a friend by his side into the terrible, terrible world."

Lily put her arm round her friend kneeling beside her, giving a warm clasp of sympathy if nothing more. Helen's heart was beating sadly, with a suppressed passion, but Lily felt as if her slim young frame was all one desperate pulse, clanging in her ears and tingling to her fingers' ends. Was it her fault that in all her veins there burned this sense of impotence, this dreadful miserable consciousness that she could do nothing, move no one, and was powerless to shape her own fate? Helen was powerless too, but in how different a way! sure that she would have been able to fulfil that highest purpose if only her steps had been free—whereas Lily was humiliated by the certainty that there was no power at all in her—that to everybody with whom she was connected she was a creature without individual potency, whose fate was to be decided for her by the will of others. The contrast of Helen's feeling, which was so different, gave a bitterness to her pain.

"It was all very simple," said Helen, "my father—you have never seen him at his best, Lily—there is not a cleverer man, nor a better learned, in all this countryside—was tutor to Mr. Duff when they were both young, and the boys, as they grew up, used to come to him for lessons. Alick was the youngest, just two years older than me, that am the last of all. They were great friends with our own boys, who are both out in the world and oh, alack! not doing so very well that we should cast a stone at other folk. Eh, but he was

a bonny boy ! dark, always dark like his mother : but the flower of the flock, and courted and petted wherever he went. He was a wild boy, and wild he was, I will not deny it, in his youth—and began by giving me a very sore heart : for, from the first that I can mind of, I have never thought of any man but him. And then he was sent away abroad—oh, not for punishment—to do better and make up the lost way. He came to my father and he said, ‘Let Helen go with me, and I’ll do well.’ I was but nineteen, Lily, and him twenty-one. They just laughed him to scorn. ‘It would be the Babes in the Wood over again,’ they said, and what was I, a little lass at home, that I could be of any help to a man. Lily !” cried Helen, her mild eyes shining, her cheeks aglow, “I knew better myself, though I dared not say it, and he, poor laddie, he knew best of all. I should have gone with him then ! that very moment ! if I had but seen it : and oh, I did see, but I was so young, and no boldness in my heart. My father said, ‘Work you your best for five years and wipe out all the old scores, and come back and ye shall have her, whether it pleases your father or no.’ For the family would not have it. I was not good enough for them. But little was my father minding for that. He never thought upon the old Laird but as a boy he had given palmies to, and kept in for not knowing his lessons. He did not care a snap of his fingers for the old Laird.”

“At nineteen, and him twenty-one !” Lily said.

“Oh yes—they all said it was folly, and maybe I would say so too if I saw another pair. But for all that it was not folly, Lily. He wanted me to run away with him, and say no word. And oh, but I was in a terrible swither what to do. It’s peetiful to be so young: you have no experience, you cannot answer a word when they preach you down with their old saws. I thought upon my mother that was weakly, and Tom and Jamie giving a good deal of trouble. And at the last I would not. It was my moment,” she said softly, with a sigh, “and I had a perception of it ; but I was frightened, Lily, and oh, so silly and young !”

“Helen, you could not, you should not have done it. It would have been impossible. It would have been wrong !”

Helen only shook her head with a melancholy smile. “And then he came back,” she said, “at

the end of the five years. Never, never, Lily, may you have the feeling I had when I saw Alick Duff again. Something said in me, ‘Eelen, Eelen, that is your work !’ The light had gone from his eyes, and the open look, his bonnie brow was all lined. He had grown to be the man you saw to-day. But what would that have mattered to me ? He had but the more need of me. Alas, alas ! my mother was dead, the boys all adrift, and my father taken with his illness, and what could I do then ? He pleaded sore, and my heart went with him. Oh, I fear he had been wild, wild ! He came back without a shilling in his pocket or a prospect before him. The old Laird was still living, and went about with a brow like thunder. He looked as if he hated every man that named Alick’s name : but them that knew best said he was the favourite still of all the sons. And Mrs. Duff that had been so proud, that would not have the minister’s daughter for her bonny boy, she came to me herself, Lily. You see it was not me only that thought it. She said, ‘Eelen, if you will marry him, you will save my bonnie lad yet.’ But I could not, I could not, Lily. How could I leave my own house that had trouble in it, and nobody to make a stand but me ?”

“They were selfish and cruel,” cried Lily, “they would have sacrificed you for the hope of saving an ill man !”

“Oh whisht, whisht,” cried Helen again. “And now he has come back. And everything is changed. The old Laird is dead and gone, and John Duff that was never very kind, is Laird in his stead, and there’s no home for him there in his father’s house. And he’s a far older man—eight years it was this time that he was away. And you will wonder to hear me say a bonnie lad when you look at that black-browed man. But I see my bonnie lad in him still, Lily : he is aye the same to me. And oh, if you knew how it drags my heart out of my bosom when he bids me come with him and I cannot. He says we might save the fragments that remain—but there’s more than that, more than that ! He has wasted his youth, but he has not yet lived half his life. And there’s that to save, Lily—and him and me together we could stand : oh, Lily, there’s neither man nor devil that I would fear for Alick’s sake, and at Alick’s side, to save him—before it is too late.”

"Helen," cried Lily, "what do I know? I dare not speak; but what if after all you could not save him? If he cannot stand by himself, how could you make him? You are but a little delicate woman: you are not fit to fight. Oh, Helen, Helen, what if you could not save him when all is done!"

"I am not feared," Helen said, with a serene countenance. And then there suddenly came a cloud over her, and tears came to her eyes. "What is the use of speaking," she said, throwing up her hands with an impatience unlike her usual calm, "when I can do nothing?—when he must just go away again without hope, my poor Alick! and come back no more. And that will be the end both of him and me," she went on, "two folk that might have made a home, and served God in our generation, and brought up children and received strangers, and held our warm place in the cold world. One of us will perish away yonder, among wild beasts and ill men, and one of us will just fade away on the roadside, like a flower thrown away when its sweetness is gone—and it will be no better for any mortal, but maybe worse, that Alick Duff and Helen Blythe were born into this weary world."

"Oh, Helen, Helen!" cried Lily, "I think Alick Duff must have been the cloud that has come over your life and turned its brightness to dark. If you had not always been thinking of him you would have had another home and a brighter life. And even now—can I not see myself?—don't you know very well there is a good man——"

"Oh," cried Helen, rising up with sudden animation, almost pushing Lily's kneeling figure from her, "go away from me with your good man! It is enough to make a person unjust, to make ye hate the name of good! How do you know whether they are good or no, one of them? Were they ever tempted like him? Had they ever the fire of hot thoughts in their head, or the struggle in their hearts? Was nature ever in them running free and wild like a great river, carrying the brigs and the dams away? or, just a drumlie quiet stream, aye content in its banks, and asking no more? Oh, dinna speak to me of your good man! It's blasphemy, it's sacrilege, it's the sin that will never be pardoned. There is but one man, be he good or bad, and one woman that is bound to

do her best for him: and ill be her lot if she fails to do it, for it is not herself she will ruin—that would matter little—the feckless creature, no worth her salt—but him too, but him too!"

She sat down again, after this little outburst, and dried her eyes. Lily, who had risen hurriedly to her feet, too, startled and almost angry, stood irresolute, not knowing how to reply, when Helen put out to her a trembling hand. "You are not to be troubled about me," she said, "you are not to be angry at what I say. It is a comfort to speak out my mind. Who can I speak to, Lily? Not to my father, who stands between me and my life; not to *him*, that rages at me as you have heard, because I cannot arise and follow him, as I would do if I could, to the end of the world. Oh, Lily, it is good for the heart, when it is full like mine, to speak. It takes away a little of the burden. 'I leant my back untill an aik'—do you mind the old song? You are not an oak, you're only a lily-plant, but oh! the comfort to lean on you, Lily, just for a moment, just till I get my breath."

"Say to me whatever you like, Helen, say anything. I may not agree——"

"I am not asking you to agree—how should you agree, you that know nothing? Oh, Lily, my bonnie Lily," cried Helen, suddenly looking in her face, "am I speaking blasphemy, too? You may know more than I think: there is that in your face that was not there six months ago."

The colour changed in Lily's cheek, but she did not flinch. "If I know anything," she said, "it is not in your way, Helen. I am not the kind of woman that can change a man's thoughts or his life. I am one that has no power. If I tried your way I would fail. No one has changed a thought or a purpose in all my life for me. I am useless, useless. I have to do what other folk tell me, and wait other folks' pleasure, and blow here and blow there like a straw in the wind. And I love it not, I love it not," she cried. "It is as bad for me as for you."

Helen thought she knew what the girl meant. She was here in durance, bound by her uncle's hard will, prevented, too, from carrying out the choice of her heart. It had not yet dawned upon the elder woman that Lily's experience had gone further than this. And it is possible that the



gentle Helen, used all her life to an influence over others far stronger than seemed natural to her character, and believing fully and strongly in that power, could not have understood the higher trial of the far more vivacious and vigorous nature

beside her, which flung itself in vain against the rock of another mind inaccessible to any power it possessed, and clear-sighted and strong-willed, had yet to submit, and do nothing but submit.

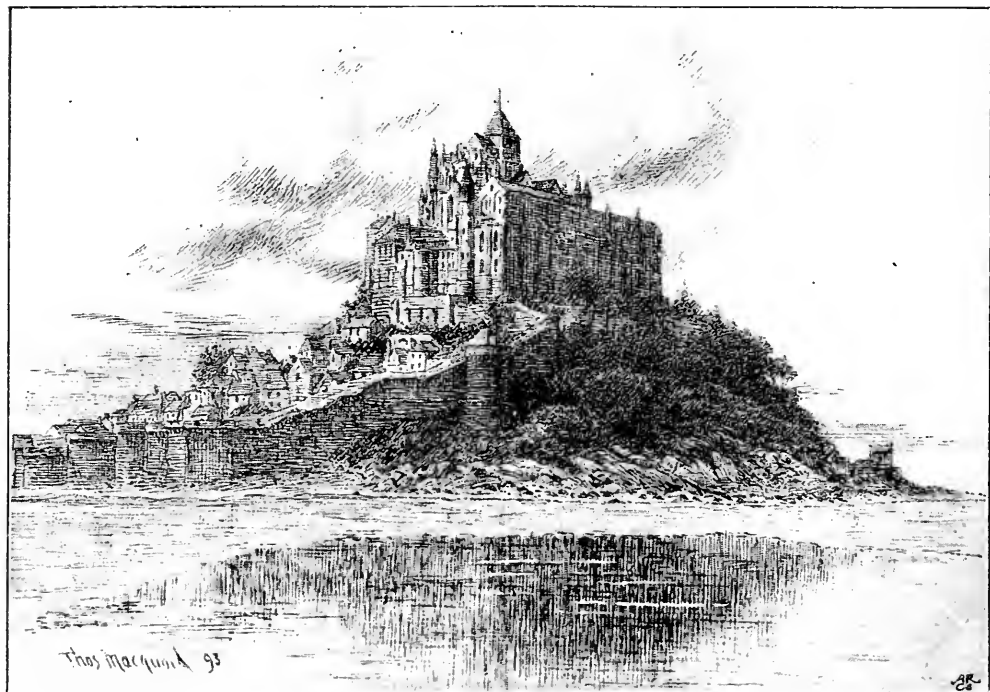
*(To be continued.)*

## A MAIDEN'S WISH.

TELL me not what I am ! O, speak not so !  
 O, lay not bare my heart before my eyes !  
 Teach me not how my swift thoughts come and go ;  
 Shew me not where my strength or beauty lies.  
 Let me, even from myself, keep hidden still  
 What power or spirit I may have in me.  
 Let me guard free from slightest taint of ill  
 The beauties you or others in me see.  
 Keep from me what you see my face reveal  
 Unconscious ; let me live my Heart's life now,  
 Trusting, unknowing. Let me have the seal  
 Of Modesty and Faith upon my brow.  
 So shall I keep pure and serene in me  
 That "Buried Life" we are not meant to see.

E. A. D.





MONT ST. MICHEL.

## MONT ST. MICHEL: NORMANDY.

BY GILBERT S. MACQUOID.



HAT fascinating French woman, and queen of letter writers, Madame de Sevigné, called Mont St. Michel "the eighth wonder of the world"—high praise, no doubt, but not too high

when applied to the grand monastic buildings which crown the famous Mount.

Think of the difficulties those persevering old monkish architects had to contend with! A barren, rocky mount, completely surrounded at high tide by the sea, and distant about a mile from the shore; at low tide, in place of the sea, danger-

ous quicksands; no materials for building near at hand, of necessity everything to be brought with much difficulty over those treacherous sands and swiftly-rushing seas; the last place on which ordinary men would have thought of building.

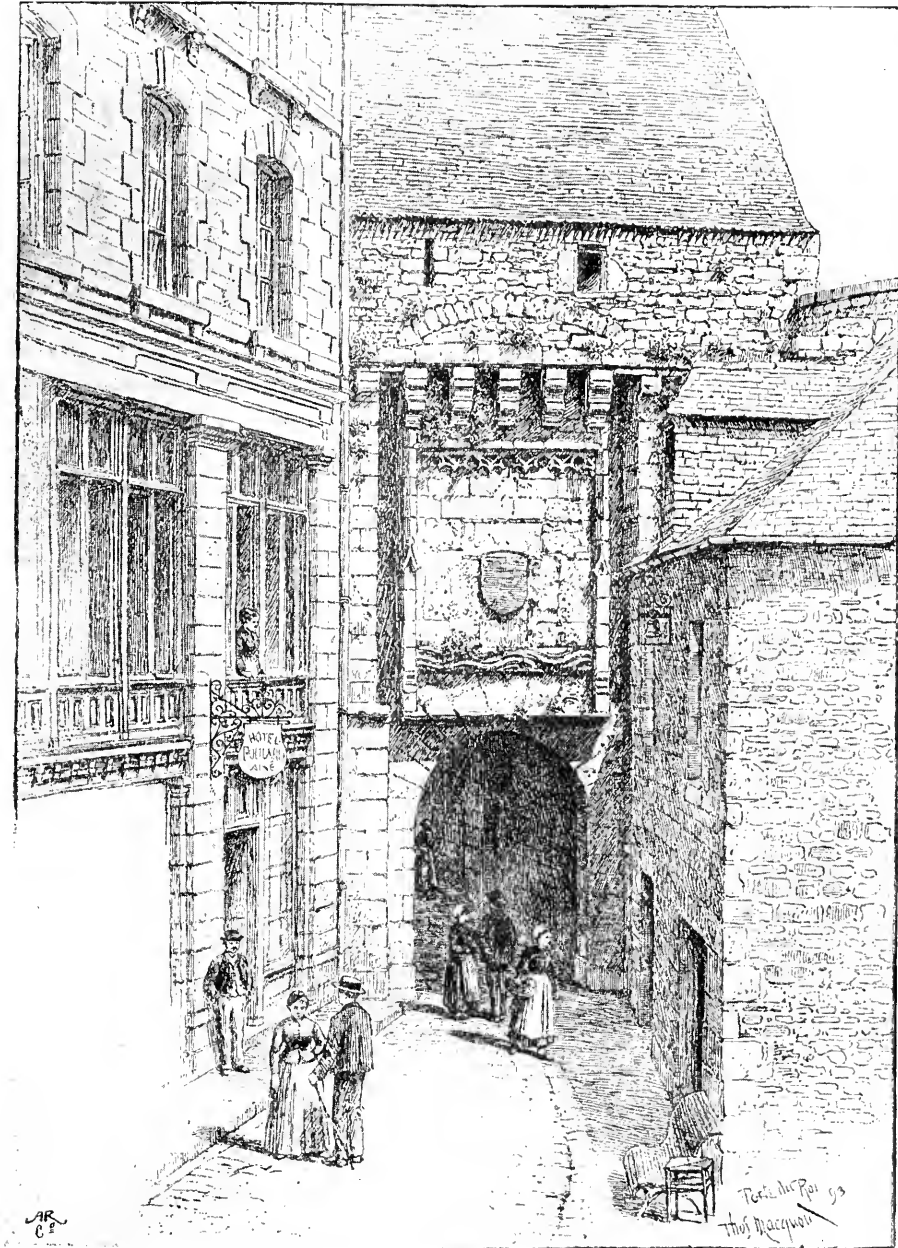
Yet, in this dreary region, and under such apparently insuperable conditions, these master-builders raised a pile of buildings which, for combined strength and beauty, are hardly matched in Europe. The monks, indeed, built their house upon a rock, and its present sturdy condition bears witness to the wisdom of their choice in a foundation.

Mont St. Michel, though of late years divested of some of its weird mystery by the making of the broad embankment leading to its battlemented walls, is still one of the most interesting spots in Europe. A visit to this wonderful rock—town or town rock—it is difficult to know which to call it, rock and building are so intermingled—is more like the realization of some grim fairy tale than any other expedition we are acquainted with, at all events,

than any other expedition so close to England. And from London how easy it is to get there! A journey from Victoria by the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway to Newhaven, and from

delightful by a rest at the always fascinating town of Rouen, the treasury of France for beauty in Gothic architecture.

The start from Pontorson, the nearest town to



PORT DU ROI.

there by one of the Company's fine steamers to Dieppe, is both cheap and expeditious; and the further journey may be broken and made more

the Mount, is prosaic enough. Perhaps the top-heavy and unwieldy Diligence, with its huge orange and white canvas covering, drawn up out-

side the railway station of Pontorson, looks somewhat queer and unusual; but Pontorson itself, though a bright and clean-looking little French town, possesses nothing of especial interest, beyond a church of the twelfth century.

A few kilometres' distance from the rock-town the excitement and mystery begin. As we look ahead we see the huge pyramid of the marvellous Mount rising grandly out of the middle of the sea. At first only the upper part of the rocky pyramid is visible, the causeway over the recently raised embankment is hidden, and we begin to wonder how we shall get there. But in a few minutes more we come close to the sea, and the broad road of two nearly kilometres over the water stretches out before us. Then, as we approach nearer the wonderful castled-rock, another mystery arises, the road leads straight to a long battlemented and massive stone wall, no entrance is visible; we wonder, in a sort of hazy way, if they let down baskets from the top of this wall and haul up visitors! for there appears to be no other way of gaining access to the mysterious place. But as we come close to the wall we see a small wooden foot-bridge on the left of the causeway: when the cumbrous vehicle stops, we get out, follow one of the numerous touts from the hotels over the plank bridge, turn an angle of the impregnable wall on the right, go through an archway, and we are in the town of Mont St. Michel: a few steps further, standing at the entrance of the now celebrated hotel, Poulard Ainé, we see Monsieur and Madame Poulard ready to receive their guests.

Old records tell us that a great part of the extensive bay in which Mont St. Michel stands was formerly covered by vast and wild tracts of timbered land, called the forest of Scissy; but in the sixth century, A.D., owing to the constant attacks of the waves, the forest had disappeared, and the sea had taken possession of all the bay, except the rocky isles of the Mount and Tombelaine. In its train the sea brought enormous quantities of sand, and gradually the forest land became covered with this substance; some of the firmer parts have been reclaimed and turned into profitable soil, but large portions are still soft, and are dangerous snares to the unwary wanderers over them. Rather more than a hundred years ago a ship was wrecked on these treacherous sands, and sank so rapidly that in a day and a night it disappeared, masts and all.

At the present day the difference between high and low water makes an extraordinary feature of the bay of Mont St. Michel; this is especially noticeable at the times of the equinox. Then the incoming sea leaps along for miles and miles like a greyhound. The actual difference between high and low water mark is twelve kilometres, or more than seven miles, and woe betide the person who is caught wandering far out on the sands.

The rocky Mount itself, exclusive of buildings, is upwards of three hundred feet in height. It is said to have been, in the time of the Gauls, a stronghold of Druidesses, who issued solemn oracles from their rocky sanctuary. Later, the Romans built an altar to Jove on the summit of the Mount, and it was called Mons Jovis or Mont-Jou. In early Christian days the Franks erected two oratories dedicated to St. Etienne and St. Symphorian, and the Mount was called Mons Tombæ, or Mont de la Tombe; the smaller mount close by was called Tumbella, or Mont Belenus, from which comes the modern name of Tombelaine.

The first chapel dedicated to Saint Michael was built on the Mount by St. Aubert, Bishop of Avranches, in 708: he sent a dozen monks to live there, and since that time the Mount has been called by the name of the Archangel.

The shrine soon became famous for the wonders worked there, and the Mount was much resorted to by pilgrims from that day until a few years ago. Emperors went there, including Charlemagne, and among the Kings were Saint Louis and Francis I.

The town at the foot of the Mount appears to have had a beginning in the ninth century, when some of the inhabitants on the neighbouring coast, flying from the raids of the fierce Northmen or Normans, took refuge on the solitary Mount.

The town consists of little more than a single street, which winds steeply up to the monastic buildings on the summit. In the upper part of this street are the remains of the house which Bertrand du Guesclin caused to be built in 1356 for his noble wife, Tiphaine Ragueneil.

The first house, after the angle of that formidable battlemented wall, of which I have spoken, is passed, is the Hotel Poulard Ainé. At the entrance to the hotel, as I have said, we were received by Monsieur and Madame Poulard in person. Madame has been a beauty and is most courteous and attentive to her visitors; she is

altogether a notable woman. Monsieur is a fine handsome man and a hard worker.

Mount. A good part of the way to our rooms was up the steep steps of an open-air stone staircase



TOUR DU GUET.

We were conducted, with numerous other guests who had arrived at the same time, to our airy rooms in the Dépendance Maison Rouge, half way up the

very delightful for young folk in fine weather, but for elderly or delicate people in wet weather, not so agreeable an experience.

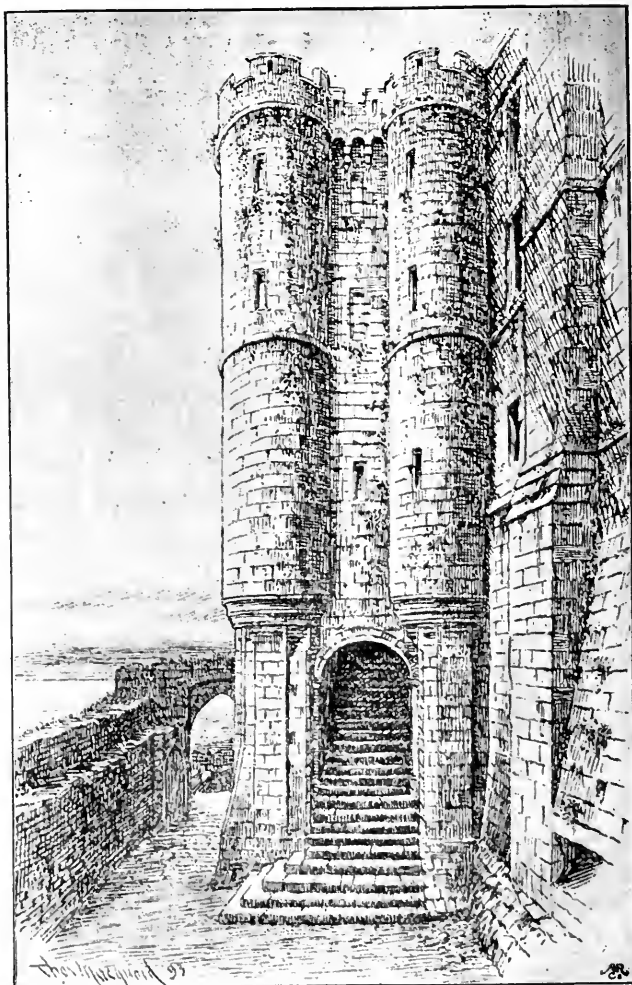
However, the weather during our visit was perfect, and we thoroughly enjoyed the alfresco sort of existence.

The praises of Monsieur and Madame Poulard have been so often sung, that it is almost superfluous to repeat them. But it is difficult to overpraise these worthy people, and Madame Poulard's famous omelets are food for gods. Madame Poulard makes these omelets in public, with much grace and dramatic effect, over a great fire close to the entrance of the hotel, and Monsieur Poulard helps in the operation when he is not otherwise engaged.

The morning after our arrival we went up to the old fortress-Abbey. The approach to the Abbey is very grim and stern up a steep flight of steps underneath the picturesque fifteenth century donjon called the Châtelet: these steps are no longer guarded by a bronzed and mailed trooper, but half way up them a poor old beggar-woman sits dismally clanking her tin alms-box. The way leads up under the quaint fortified bridge, which connects the Abbot's house with the lower Church, to the platform Saut-Gaultier or Beauregard, at the South West corner of the Church. From this platform, which is on a level with the Church, there is a splendid view over many miles of Normandy and Brittany. Mont Dol, in Brittany, is plainly visible.

Different reasons are given for the name of this platform, Saut-Gaultier: a thirteenth century writer says that a man called Gaultier leapt from here into the sea in order to prove his devotion to his mistress. Others say it was named after the sculptor Gaultier, who was imprisoned at Mont St. Michel in the time of Francis the First, and who was employed by the monks in sculpturing the choir stalls. Gaultier proposed to execute a series of elaborate decorations for the Abbey buildings, but the abbot not falling in with his ideas, Gaultier, annoyed and excited beyond control, threw himself from the platform that now bears his name.

A third account brusquely says that the Abbot William de Lamps, early in the sixteenth century, called the spot Saut-Gaultier, because he chose so to do.



LE CHATELET.

At the west end of the church is the great platform, and from this the view is still more extended than from the Saut-Gaultier. The fine church itself at the summit was undergoing restoration when we were there. It is not the original building. In 963, two centuries and more after St. Aubert's Chapel was built, Richard Sans Peur, Duke of Normandy, and son of William the Longsword, a heroic son of a heroic father, founded a fine church on the Mount, and placed there some Benedictine monks of Mont-Cassin. In the early part of the eleventh century, his son, Richard the Second of Normandy, laid the foundations of a yet larger church; these foundations still stand, and of the church built upon them and



finished in 1113 by Bernard du Bec, the thirteenth abbot, there now remain the transepts and parts of the nave.

The choir was destroyed in 1421, and rebuilt in the latter part of the same century on a grander scale.

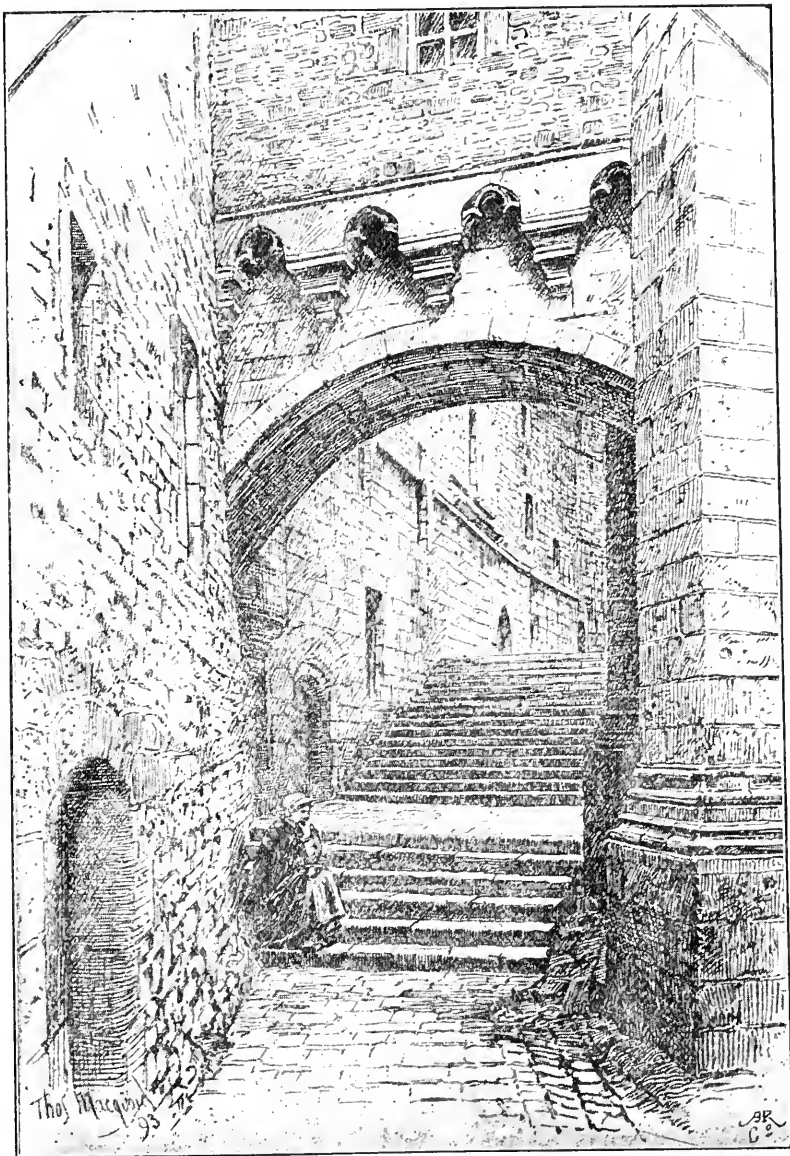
Perhaps the most remarkable features of the church at the present day are the massive flying buttresses at the east end; the difficulties of raising and fixing those ponderous masses of stone in that exposed position must have been stupendous. Among the buttresses there is an exterior stone staircase, called "l'escalier de dentelle" from the delicacy of its carving.

But the most striking part of the Abbey buildings, and that which has always excited so much wonder that it goes by the name of "La Merveille," stands at the north side of the church: La Merveille has three stories; it was originally built in the early part of the twelfth century, but it was destroyed; the rebuilding was begun in

1203 by Jourdain, the seventeenth abbot, and finished by Raoul de Villedieu, the twenty-first

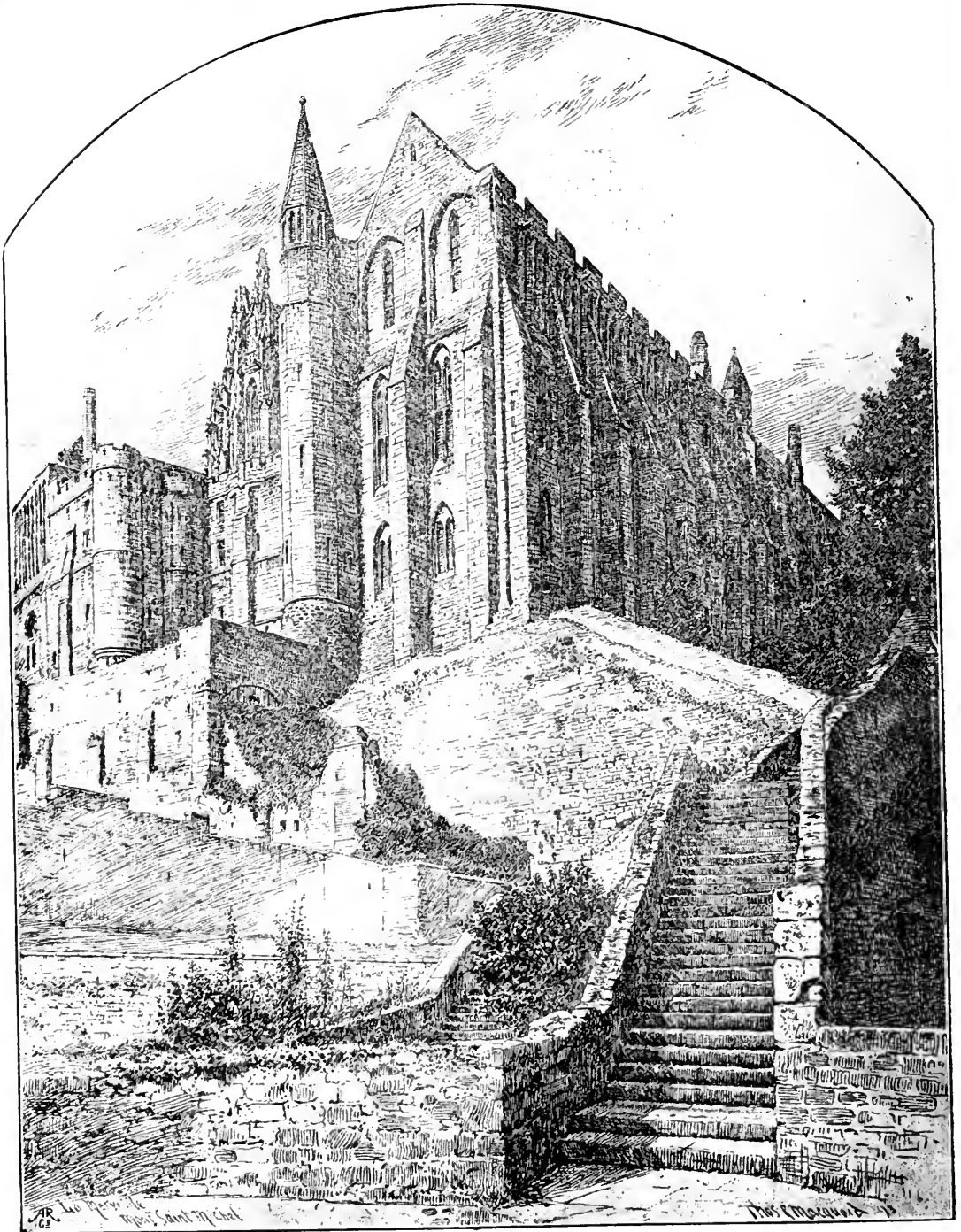
abbot, about the year 1228. A fully detailed description of La Merveille is not possible here: it would occupy the whole of this article. La Merveille is perhaps the finest example in France of monastic building of the thirteenth century. The top story, on about the same level as the church, consists of the Cloister on the west, and the Dormitory on the east.

The Cloister is particularly beautiful; it was there that the monks used to walk in medita-



FORTIFIED BRIDGE.

tion; there also was, and is, the lavatory where they used to wash their hands and feet and the bodies of the dead. The Cloister forms an oblong, about eighty feet long by forty-five feet wide, and contains altogether two hundred and twenty columns, some attached to the walls, but the greater number form a rich double colonnade round the central enclosure; elaborate sculptures decorate the spaces



LA MERVEILLE (13TH CENTURY).

between the arches which the columns support. Unfortunately for its picturesque beauty the Cloister has been restored within the last few years, and though the restoration has been made

with great respect for the original building, the charm, which age gives to such places, has somehow gone, not to return for many years. The Dormitory was being restored. Immediately below



the Cloister is the Salle des Chevaliers, used as an assembly-room on grand occasions; it is a spacious hall more than ninety feet long by nearly sixty feet wide, its eleven massive pillars with richly sculptured capitals support a beautiful vaulted roof and go to make one of the finest Gothic halls of the kind in existence. It was in the Salle des Chevaliers in 1469 that King Louis the Eleventh founded the military order of St. Michael; the motto of the order was, "Immensi tremor oceani." Of equal beauty, though with much lighter and more elegant pillars, is the Refectory, or "Salle des Hôtes," which is on the east side of the Salle des Chevaliers, and is under the Dormitory.

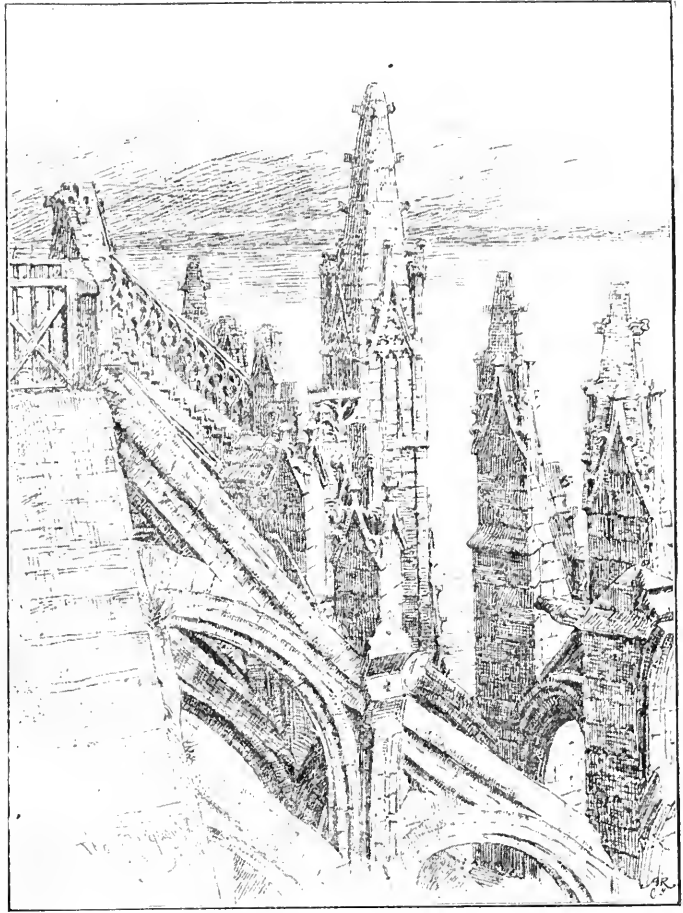
The lowest story of the Merveille is of a ruder description of architecture than the beautiful upper stories, it consists of the Cellar below the Salle des Chevaliers, and the Almonry below the Refectory. The rebuilding of this part was begun by the Abbot Jourdain in 1203.

The rock of the Mount was so uneven that it was necessary to make very extensive foundations for the choir of the church, and these foundations we see in the unusually lofty and spacious Crypte des Gros Piliers.

Below the great platform at the west-end of the church is the ancient cloister, built by the Abbot Roger the Second, in the early part of the twelfth century, afterwards used by the monks as a promenade. Under this promenade, and built at the same time, is the Crypte de l'Aquilon, a most picturesque place, the capitals of its massive pillars richly sculptured; the base of one pillar is formed by the rock of the Mount, which is plainly visible. The ghastly catacombs are under the nave of the church.

From the time of King Louis the Eleventh Mont St. Michel was used as a State prison, and a staircase leads from the Crypte de l'Aquilon to the principal cells which were used for the prisoners.

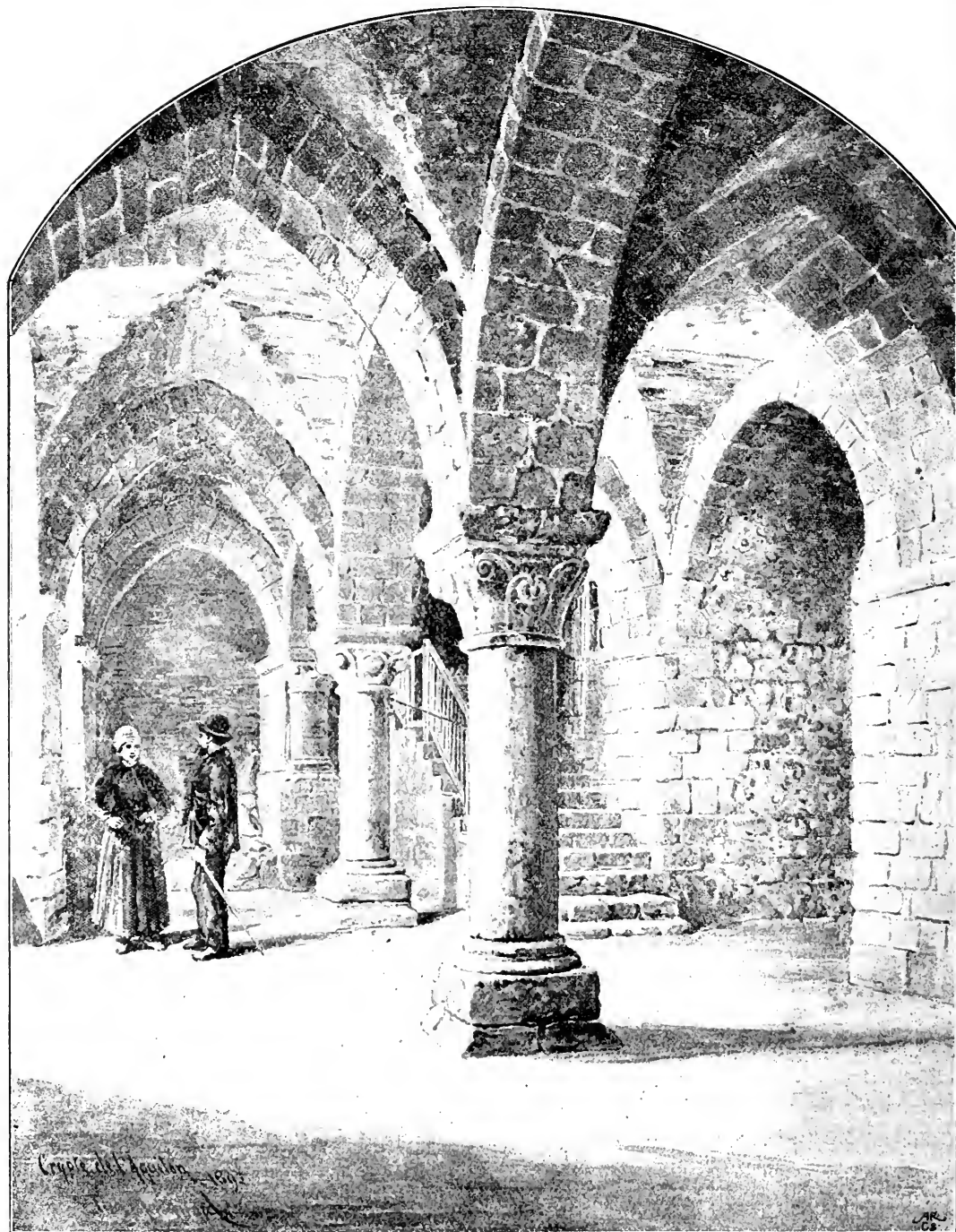
There were in all more than fifty Abbots of Mont St. Michel, beginning with Maynard the



L'ESCALIER DE DENTELLES.

First, in 966, and ending with De Montmorency Laval, in 1789. During the Revolution the monastery was suppressed. Of all the long line of abbots perhaps the most famous was Robert de Torigni or Robert du Mont, who ruled over the abbey from 1154 to 1186. Huynes, in his chronicle, calls him "the great builder, the great librarian, the ornament of his order, the revered of queens, the counsellor of kings, the mirror of prelates, the mouth of popes." He added considerably to the abbey buildings, raised the number of the monks from forty to sixty; he also wrote numerous books and collected many more for the abbey library.

Many remarkable persons were imprisoned in the cells of Mont St. Michel. Among them was Count Gilles, of Brittany, the second son of John the Sixth, Duke of Brittany. Count Gilles had been to the



CRYPTE DE L'AIGLON.

Court of Henry the Sixth, of England, and was accused of treacherous intercourse with the English; he had also secretly married Alice of Dinant, who was beloved by his elder brother, Francis the First,

Duke of Brittany. Francis caused him to be confined in one of the dungeons of Mont St. Michel, meaning him to starve to death, but a peasant woman contrived to bring food to the Count.

In 1450, nearly four years after he had been shut up, his brother, Duke Francis, had him either poisoned or suffocated. At the funeral service of the Count, his confessor solemnly summoned Francis to appear before God within forty days, to give an account of the murder of his brother, and just forty days after the dark deed was done Francis died of remorse.

Gaultier, the sculptor, has been already referred to as a prisoner at Mont St. Michel.

Close to the ancient cloister, or monks' promenade, in a gloomy spot to which no daylight penetrates, there is an arched recess in the wall. Formerly massive iron bars stretched across the mouth of this recess; it was one of the most terrible of the dungeons of Mont St. Michel, and was known as the iron cage.

In the middle of the last century there was living at Leyden, in Holland, with his wife and four children, a young journalist, named Dubourg, or Victor de la Cassagne; they were a happy and united family, and their days passed pleasantly in the old red-roofed university town. But Dubourg was of a daring, critical spirit, and his pen often got the better of his prudence; one day he wrote a slashing article on Louis the Fifteenth, and freely condemned the conduct of the French king. Without any warning, Dubourg was seized, taken to Mont St. Michel, and no one outside the Mount knew what had become of him.

On the morning of the 27th of August, 1746, the jailor paid his usual visit to the iron cage with bread and water. By the dim light of the lantern he carried, it seemed to him that he saw something strange and horrible. Chained to the wall within the massive iron bars was a ghastly form lying on the ground; the form seemed to move and grow smaller as the jailor approached, but when he put his light close to the bars he plainly saw numbers of rats scuttling away in all directions, and the half-eaten corpse of Dubourg lay exposed to view.

Nearly a century later, the painter Colombat was imprisoned at Mont St. Michel for having taken part in some political disturbances. He was not placed altogether in close confinement, but was made useful in restoring the pictures in the church. For this purpose he had the necessary things given to him, and among them were a lantern and a rope. One day, after he had been

imprisoned for some years, he discovered that part of the floor of the cell where he was usually confined was loose; he raised it, and found that he was at the mouth of a sort of a well or circular hole. Thinking that he might find some means of escape at the bottom, he determined to explore the place; and, making fast his rope, he slid down, lantern in hand. When he reached the bottom, he could not at first make out anything, but he heard a creeping and rustling all round him; and then by the dim light that he carried, he saw that the bottom of the pit was covered with skeletons in all attitudes: some lying scattered in pieces, others sitting upright against the sides of the wall, where they had starved to death; over them and among them crept and ran innumerable foul and loathsome things. Colombat clambered up his rope as quickly as he could.

After several fruitless attempts to escape, Colombat at last found an underground passage, by which he made his way to the sands, and so escaped to Jersey. He returned to France in 1848, and kept a restaurant in Caen, which he called "*À la Descente du Mont St. Michel.*" There he was in the habit of giving his visitors an account of his adventures and extraordinary escape. He was the only prisoner who was known to find his way out of the dungeons of the Mount; he lived until 1881.

A Museum has recently been opened near the Abbey buildings, containing a number of interesting relics in the shape of old documents, coffers, swords, guns, pistols, &c.

Owing to the rocky nature of the Mount, little fresh water is found in Mont St. Michel: there is the fountain of St. Aubert near the chapel of this name close to the sands, but nearly all the drinking-water is brought over the causeway in great wooden barrels. There are few vegetables and little fruit on the island, with the exception of some figs and grapes which are noted for their fine flavour.

The causeway leading to Mont St. Michel over the embankment no doubt makes a visit to this famous place much easier and safer than it was formerly, but a great deal of the romantic charm of the expedition has been destroyed; and it is said that the embankment, by altering the course of the waves, has caused them to beat more violently against the ramparts, and threaten serious damage.

# THE FOLDING AND UNFOLDING OF THE TAIL.

## A SNAKE STORY.

ONCE upon a time in one of Her Majesty's sub-tropical colonies, a Red-Tapist entered his office and finding, as he expected, little to do but his private accounts to "tot" up and some cricket scores to tally, he began, according to the official custom known in Her Majesty's colonies, and originated in the mother-country, to the best of his ability to trim his nails. It was a delicate operation and required his whole attention. His entire mind was occupied in preserving exactly an equal depth to each nail, in giving to each an equal amount of polish.

A rustling sound disturbed the awe-inspiring stillness of this official apartment. The Red-Tapist functionary experienced a feeling of annoyance. Surely no petitioner or client "Wanting to know, you know," would dare to invade his privacy and interrupt his arduous duties. The rustling continued.

"The fellow must be taught his proper place," thought the Functionary, "he must learn that Her Majesty's representatives are not to be disturbed with impunity. Let him wait till I am ready to enquire into his business." And the filing process began.

Again a rustle. Nearer this time, as if the intruder wished to call attention to his presence.

"Bother the fellow!" exclaimed Her Majesty's representative. He would have said more and in more forcible language, but did not care to lose prestige before an inferior.

He turned sharply round.

The door was closed as he had closed it, but—Julius Cæsar!

A huge snake was crawling out of a hole behind the waste-paper basket, and looking at Her Majesty's representative with inquiring, unblinking, wicked eyes. It had already crawled nearly the length of the room, and yet the whole of its enormous body was not visible, fold after fold crept from the hole and rustled the papers in the basket as it passed by. Slowly but surely it drew near its sadly-expectant victim, who had no weapon of defence, and, in the horror of the moment, could think of no means of escape. Wreath after wreath, wave after wave, of the long serpentine body slowly squirmed out of the hole. When it was almost touching its nerveless victim, it suddenly

reared its head to a level with his and waved it from right to left, left to right, before him as to measured music, its narrow slits of eyes fixed the while in stony gaze upon the object of this graceful attention.

Even in this moment of extreme agony, as the Red Tapist felt the mesmeric strength of the serpent charming his senses away, the classical education of his youth revived within him:—"Keats's Lamia or some other relative of the Gorgon come to call, what can be the object of this unexpected visit?" he thought, and a feeling of interest sprang up within his breast as to what the creature would do next.

"Hope springs eternal in the human breast," with interest hope revived, and the glow of courage that had been slowly oozing out of the soles of his boots stopped.

It may be that a gleam of hope, in this supreme moment, was allowed to illumine features, which for the last eight years had been drilled into the official impassivity and immobility requisite to all Her Majesty's servants. It may be that the snake thought its victim charmed and rendered impotent, or it may be that its neck ached from its somewhat strained position. Probably the last supposition is the correct one, for the whole of the long shimmering body had not yet emerged from the hole. But however this may be, certain it is that the reptile ceased its rhythmic movement and lowered its head.

Now there was a large fire-proof safe in the office, which for convenience sake had been dragged from its original position, near the wall, to within an arm's length of the easy-chair from which the Official transacted Her Majesty's important business.

The safe in question bore a Chubb's patent lock which was regularly fastened, twice a year, when Her Majesty's representative took his long holidays, on these occasions the safe held such of his worldly possessions in its depths as did not accompany him on his travels:—an old coat, his tea-service, his best pipe and Prayer-book.

The remainder of the year the safe stood empty, and unfastened save for a patent spring which snapped directly the lid was closed.

The safe caught the Red-Tapist's eye. It seemed to be a haven of security, if he could but get into it he was saved. If only the snake should be a female! All his hopes rested on this. He knew a lady could never enter a gentleman's room without casting one backward glance to see how she looked behind. As yet the snake had confined its attention to him and given no proof of feminine vanity. He waited in eager expectation, and even as he waited, she turned and gazed complacently upon the beauteous sheen of her glistening, glimmering tail.

He who hesitates is lost! Not one second did he hesitate. In a moment, in the twinkling of a bed-post, Her Majesty's representative was curled round in an ungraceful, undignified position within the safe.

"Saved," he ejaculated. Echo more correctly answered, "Safe-d."

The lady, called from the rapt contemplation of her beauty by the slight clink of the spring, rapidly raised her head in the direction of the chair, to find it empty. Baffled rage showed itself in the fiery glitter of her eye and the agitated quiver of her form. She darted one swift glance around, and her eye caught that of her intended victim as he peered at her through the tiny chink left open to admit air. Onward she swept towards the safe, round it she twined her supple length in fold on fold, round and round went her lithe body in interminable wreaths and circles, still more and more, till the whole safe seemed hidden beneath the sinuous coils, and her head, darting hither and thither, sought in vain to insert itself within the safe and take vengeance upon the incarcerated functionary within.

His joy was short-lived. Immediate danger was averted, but the danger was by no means past. So long as he held up the safe-lid the least bit in the world, he was safe from his enemy and had a moderate supply of air to breathe, but should the lid once close, a patent lock fastened him in an air-tight compartment of limited dimensions, and asphyxiation was a mere matter of minutes. Equally great was the danger that menaced him did he unintentionally raise the lid but the minutest fraction of an inch, and allow the ever-watchful snake to insert its head or tongue. Either would be certain death.

Now began the struggle, or rather trial, of

endurance and vigilance, in which the more patient and wide-awake would probably win.

They were not quite equally matched. The prize, which was dear life to the one, was but a hearty meal to the other, and every circumstance was in favour of the would-be diner.

She, though neither a ritualist nor ascetic, was accustomed to long fasts and vigils, and had now only to make herself as comfortable as possible under the circumstances while awaiting the issue of the event. Accordingly she arranged a rest for her head out of a fold of her tail, at a convenient height from the ground, whence she might gaze upon her victim through the narrow crack without trouble or weariness.

He, accustomed to regular meals—in fact, dependent upon them—and wholly unused to manual or any other labour, curled up in a cramped and tiring position, had to sustain the weight of the heavy lid. He rested it first on one shoulder, then on the other; tried holding it up with his hands, tried his head, but in no way could lighten its leaden weight. All the time the snake fixed him with her glassy eye, never a wink breaking the monotony of her stare, no sense of modesty causing her even for one brief moment to lower her eyes. In this way minute after minute passed. Minutes slipped into hours.

There was no hope of a rescue, nobody was likely to call, the press of official work was not great, and even if Her Majesty's representative were not seen for a day or two, his absence would make no stir; nobody would seek him; it would be supposed that he had appropriated a holiday, and not for the first time.

As the day wore on, it was with a feeling akin to regret that he thought of mutton cutlets and tobacco; he hoped that his enemy might retire to satisfy her appetite, but the pangs of hunger did not appear to oppress her, and then the knowledge came to him, in a meteoric flash, that the hungrier she became the less likely would she be to abandon her position round her meat-safe.

The afternoon passed slowly. The lid grew heavier and the arms wearier, the tension of the muscles more strained as each minute dragged sixty weary seconds in its train. It seemed impossible to hold out many seconds longer, and the poor victim was just debating within himself how he could find room to toss a small coin in order to

decide the knotty point—death by strangulation, or by suffocation—heads, serpent; tails, safe—when something slipped from his grasp and fell to the bottom of the safe. It was his penknife. He had entirely forgotten it, yet had held it in his hand since his visitor's first appearance that morning, nor ever relaxed its hold till now.

The noise of its fall created a slight diversion. The snake raised her head, and, thinking her victim was planning a change of tactics, determined not to be outdone, but to carry the war, if possible, into the enemy's camp. Making her tail as thin and flat as possible, she endeavoured to insert it through the crack; it would have been the thin edge of the wedge, once in, the rest of the body must follow. For fully half-an-hour the two kept up a game which would have been amusing but that the stakes were too high; up and down went the lid, backwards and forwards went the tail; once the extreme point got nipped as the lid slipped, and was only saved by coming in sharp contact with the victim's cranium—an incident causing extreme anguish to both. Tears of pain started to the eyes of the snake, who immediately applied the injured part to her mouth, while great beads of perspiration rolled from the forehead of the incarcerated one, at the narrow squeak he had of losing his life. The game was abandoned as too perilous, and the snake settled herself once more to wait and watch; folding herself more closely, if possible, round the safe, she managed, by dint of stretching, to make one more wreath round, and, by holding her tail in her mouth, prevented any relaxation or slip.

This last wreath pressed on the air-giving chink, and the influx of air was impeded, almost stopped. This was desperate. Determined to make one last effort, Her Majesty's representative bethought himself of his penknife. Seizing it, he thrust the open blade again and again into the enveloping folds of the reptile.

At first the beast took no notice of these puerile attacks, doubtless attributing them to the malice of some wandering flea or mosquito; as the pricks became incessant and more irritating, it shrugged itself within its skin, and finally removed its tail from its mouth, with this appendage to flick off the offending insect.

Stab, stab, went the tiny blade, pitilessly, remorselessly. Flick, flick, went the tail, productive

of no relief to the snake. Stab went the tiny instrument of torture, till the whole length of the snake quivered with anguish; and still the snake looked in vain for the cause of her pains.

It is written that drops of water will wear away a stone: in much the same way these insignificant pricks were performing a mighty work, draining from the enormous body its life-blood.

Yet Her Majesty's representative had no hope of release from his precarious position; his plan was to prevent the coils from tightening around the chink, and so suffocating him. He had but a limited view of his enemy, and, after a few minutes, continued the stabbing process mechanically. He seemed to be losing his power to think; his one object was, now things were come to the worst, to die hard. He could not see the languor and weakness that were gradually overcoming his enemy, but none the less he kept up his incessant attack on every part of her body within reach.

Slowly the minutes passed; gradually, but very gradually, the coils relaxed; a film clouded the once glassy eye; the tail sank powerless to the floor; slight tremors from time to time agitated the lengthy body; then came one convulsive spasm that shook the safe, one great gasping sigh, and the snake sank dead upon the floor, dead from loss of blood.

Thankfully did Her Majesty's representative step from the safe over the prostrate body of his foe, when the true state of the case penetrated the safe and his cranium. For some minutes he had hesitated, thinking the snake capable of a feint or feminine wile, but the truth dawned, and jubilation succeeded hesitation. Ere he left the office he severed the extremity of the snake's tail from its body, to preserve as a memento of one of the most perilous adventures of his life.

The story of this hair-breadth escape he relates frequently, with variations, to his friends and acquaintances; and having told his tale, he invariably produces the latter end of his whilom adversary, as a voucher for his veracity.

Only the other day he told his tale to a lady, and produced his relic; she expressed great wonder at his keeping what must awaken within him feelings of the most intense horror.

He replied quickly, as he restored it to his waistcoat pocket, "It is always convenient to have a tale on which, at any time, you can re-lie."

## MUSIC-LOVING ANIMALS.

By A. W. WILSON.

WHO says that the legend of Orpheus is mere fable? Who denies that there may have been something in the wonders that followed the preaching of St. Francis of Assisi to the birds and the fishes? May there not have been some subtle music in the voice of the saint? A certain type of man exercises an unusual influence over the lower creatures by means for which he cannot definitively account. May it not be that he pleases the ear as well as the eye and the sense of scent? Great powers are lodged in favoured constitutions in this way, and it would be strange if the human voice did not share in the result; for of all wonderful organs, the human voice is, perhaps, the most wonderful. It sums up in itself the secrets and the magic of all instruments. Coleridge's fine words might be used here:

"For now 'tis like all instruments,  
Now like a lonely lute;  
And now 'tis like an angel's song  
That makes the heavens be mute."

The human voice has worked many charms; it is the original of all music, and when the music of the instrument is added to the human voice, then you have the perfection of the charm. In India the snake-charmers largely make music their instrument, but they mutter incantations too, and this suggests a quotation. The Pied Piper of Hamelin, according to Robert Browning, probably also according to the original legend, was aided by a voice, or what appeared a voice.

"And it seemed as if a voice  
(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery  
Is breathed), called out, 'Oh, rats, rejoice!'"

Well, if we do not wonder at the conquests of the human voice, we need not be one whit surprised at the charms wrought by instruments. Mrs. Barrett Browning (worthy wife of a profound poet) has enshrined this truth in wonderful verse in her "Great God Pan," which any person curious on the subject can turn to and read. The philosophy of all the influence man obtains over lower nature is symbolised, if not clearly intimated there.

We all know that birds love music, as most of

them discourse it; but other animals not usually accredited generically with any love of harmonious sounds have yet shown in favoured specimens that it will not do to trust to appearances. Dogs, for example, will only howl when they hear a fiddle; yet there have been dogs which have shown favour for the organ. A story is told of one which waited at an ancient church door till the organist came to practise, and went in and lay at his feet, and remained there till the player left the instrument. But to show that the attraction was not for the person, one day there came a stranger who, not knowing this dog's partiality for organ music, deemed he meant harm, and was at all pains to warn him off. The dog was found with head close to the door catching what of concord he could from the distance.

We do not usually associate cats with music: their caterwauling at night is not melodious, and most people are more likely to preserve memory of that than of more recondite and unexpected traits. Nevertheless, one case has come within our own experience of a music-loving cat. *Tui* was a fine tabby, with a beautifully marked head and peculiarly gentle expression. We had him from kittenhood, and he soon became a great favourite with all the family. Especially did he attach himself to a young girl who was very fond of music, and spent a considerable portion of every day at the piano as he was growing up. From very early days his delight was to get into the room with her, and if she did not take any notice of him as she practised he would steal up and pat her on the knees till she made room for him to jump up on her lap, when he would lie down and listen with evident pleasure as she played. Sometimes when she took a rest he would venture on the keyboard and walk forward and backward, making a kind of music to himself, and then despairing of producing quite such fine sounds as she did, he would step back into her lap and mew beseechingly up in her face as though begging her to go on again; when she did this he would lie down as before, and purr a soft accompaniment to her music, as if by this to



express his delight. I have seen him do this many times, and his little mistress was very fond of showing off his accomplishments in this respect to our friends when they called on us. Great surprise was often produced by his feats, and one of our servants was wont seriously to declare that Tui could not be a mere cat. Yet a mere cat he was, and a fairly good mouser and very fond of hunting birds, which he sometimes caught by the ruse of lying on the branch of a tree so absolutely still that the birds fancied he was sound asleep, and would venture too near, when suddenly he would spring and seize them with his claws.

It is told in Mozart's biography that a pet pigeon which the musician had, was not only attached to him but to the music he produced. It could not be kept away when the master was playing, and would resent any effort to drive it away. This was in Mozart's earlier life. The bird, we are told, had even occasionally to be imprisoned in a cage to prevent it annoying the composer when he was improvising his strains before proceeding to write them down. It invariably showed, when loose, the greatest impatience from the time of preparation till the playing began, and then it would even alight on the violin and peck at the strings with avidity, as if enjoying the sounds it thus produced.

There have been many instances of mice which unmistakably showed a musical ear. This is one case culled from the pages of the *Bristol Advertiser* of 1856 :

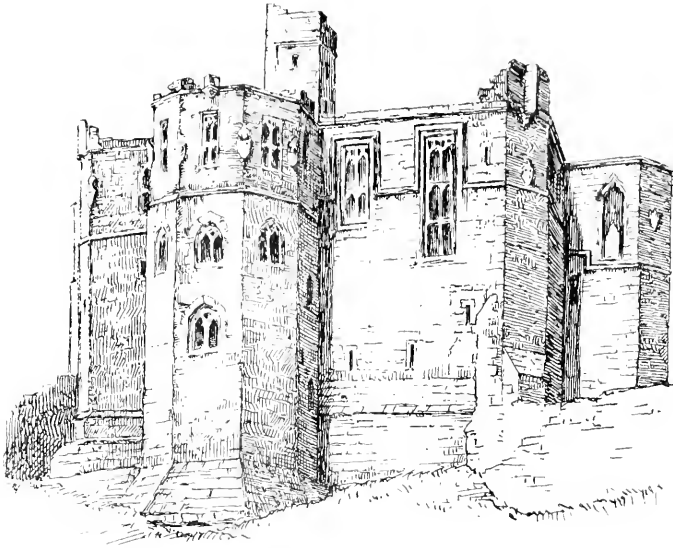
"Miss Louisa Foote Hay gave a concert last week at Colyton. Soon after Miss Hay had commenced her first song, the party occupying the front seats saw a mouse sauntering leisurely up and down, close to the skirting of the platform on which she was singing. The mouse seemed spell-bound as the song proceeded. A lady shook her concert bill at it with the intention of driving it away, but the little creature would not retire. Apparently it had lost its natural timidity. The mouse vanished at the conclusion of the piece, but reappeared in company with another of its species when another singer came forward."

Dr. Millingen has given the following summary of the results of his enquiries into the effects of music on various animals:—

"Curious anecdotes are related of the effect of music upon animals. Thorville has given the following amusing account of his experiments, 'While

a man was playing on a trump-marine, I made my observations on a cat, a dog, a horse, an ass, a hind, some cows, small birds, and a cock and hens, who were in a yard under the window. The cat was not the least affected ; the horse stopped short from time to time, raising his head now and then as if he were feeding on grass ; the dog continued for above an hour seated on his hind legs, looking steadfastly at the player ; the ass did not discover the least indication of his being touched, eating his thistles peaceably ; the hind lifted up her large wide ears and seemed very attentive ; the cows stopped a little, and after gazing at us went forward ; some little birds that were in an aviary, and others on trees and bushes, almost tore their little throats with singing : but the cock, who minded only his hens, and the hens, who were solely employed in scraping a neighbouring dung-hill, did not show in any manner that the trump-marine afforded them pleasure.' That dogs have an ear for music cannot be doubted. Steibelt had one which evidently knew one piece of music from another, and a modern composer had a pug dog that frisked merrily about the room when a lively piece was played ; but when a slow melody was performed, particularly Dusack's opera, 15, he would seat himself down by the piano and prick up his ears with intense attention, until the player came to the 48th bar, but as the discord was struck he would yell most piteously and with drooping tail, seek refuge from the unpleasant sound under the chairs or tables. Eastcot relates that a hare left her retreat to listen to some choristers who were singing on the banks of the Mersey, retiring when they ceased singing and re-appearing as they recommenced their strains. Bossuet asserts that an officer, confined in the Bastille, drew forth mice and spiders to beguile his solitude with his flute ; and a mountebank in Paris had taught rats to dance on the rope in perfect time. Chateaubriand states as a positive fact, that he has seen the rattlesnake in Upper Canada appeased by a musician, and the concert given in Paris to two elephants in the Jardin des Plantes, leaves no doubt in regard to the effect of harmony on the brute creation. Every instrument seemed to operate distinctly as the several modes of pieces were slow or lively, until the excitement of these intelligent creatures had been carried to such an extent that further experiments were deemed dangerous."





## HOUSES AND HOMES IN THE OLDEN TIMES.

BY H. A. PAGE.

NO doubt there are many who, when they read or hear of the middle ages, think of the knight, mounted, with shield and spur and spear, carolling a song as he goes forth in search of adventure ; or of the gay procession moving out to the hawking, the ladies laughing, expectant of fine sport, the pages gleeful, realising pretty well the lines :—

“ The middle-ages,  
When the knights and ladies gay,  
With plumes and hawks on wrist, and pages,  
Cast a glory on the way ! ”

Or, it may be, that they think of the crowded fair near to the place of pilgrimage, where men have met from all points to do their business and to enjoy the fun—the *jongleurs* with their songs and dances ; the mummers gesticulating ; the pedlars at their stalls, loud-voiced ; the monks passing demurely by with shaven crowns ; pardoners on hackneys with the cross before them ; the nuns seen at a crossing with their wimples, and their beads hung from their girdles. Tennyson caught the whole sentiment of this phase of the time when he sang in his early poem :—

“ Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
An abbot on an ambling pad ;  
Sometimes a curly shepherd lad,  
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,  
Goes by to towered Camelot.

And sometimes through the mirror blue,  
The knights come riding two and two.

\* \* \* \*

Their gemmy bridles glitter free,  
Like to some branch of stars we see  
Hung in the golden galaxy ;  
And from their blazoned baldric slung,  
A mighty silver bugle hung,  
And as they rode their armour rung.”

But this, though the aptest phase for poetry and picture, for sentiment and song, does not bring us so near to the very heart of the middle ages as careful attention to more prosaic and ordinary matters. What sort of houses had they then ? What kind of furniture, beds, &c. ? What did they eat, and what did they eat it with ? Were they fair cooks, or did the great fires in the vast fire-places of the castles and halls do more for the viands than culinary skill of any kind ? Were the lords in many ways distinctly better off than the workers, who, though a kind of serfs, were yet, in the words of Sir Walter Scott about Gurth, sure of the parings of the pork ? We shall try, in the following pages, in as simple a manner as we can, to answer some of these questions.

Even in the finest houses, in the middle ages, refinements and luxuries, which are now common to all but the very lowest, were unknown. Window glass was not in common use ; carpets had not



play of "Valentinian," by Beaumont and Fletcher, we read :

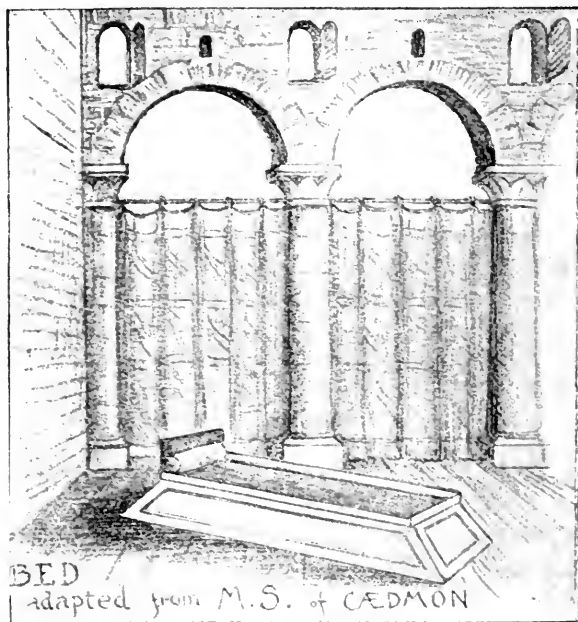
"Where is this stranger? Rushes, ladies, rushes—  
Rushes as green as summer for this stranger."

From a passage in Ben Jonson's "Every Man out of his Humour," we discover that, even after tobacco was in general vogue, rushes were still used for carpets, for there Fastidius Brisk, the gallant, as he smokes or has his pipe filled, addresses Savolina :

"Sweet lady, believe me  
I do honour the meanest rush  
in this chamber for your love."

Hentzner, the traveller, describes the floor of the presence chamber of Queen Elizabeth, at Greenwich, as, after the English fashion, strewn with hay (*i.e.*, rushes), and Dr. Bullein (1579) writes: "Rushes that grow upon dry groundes be good to strew in halles, chambors, and galleries, to walke upon, defending

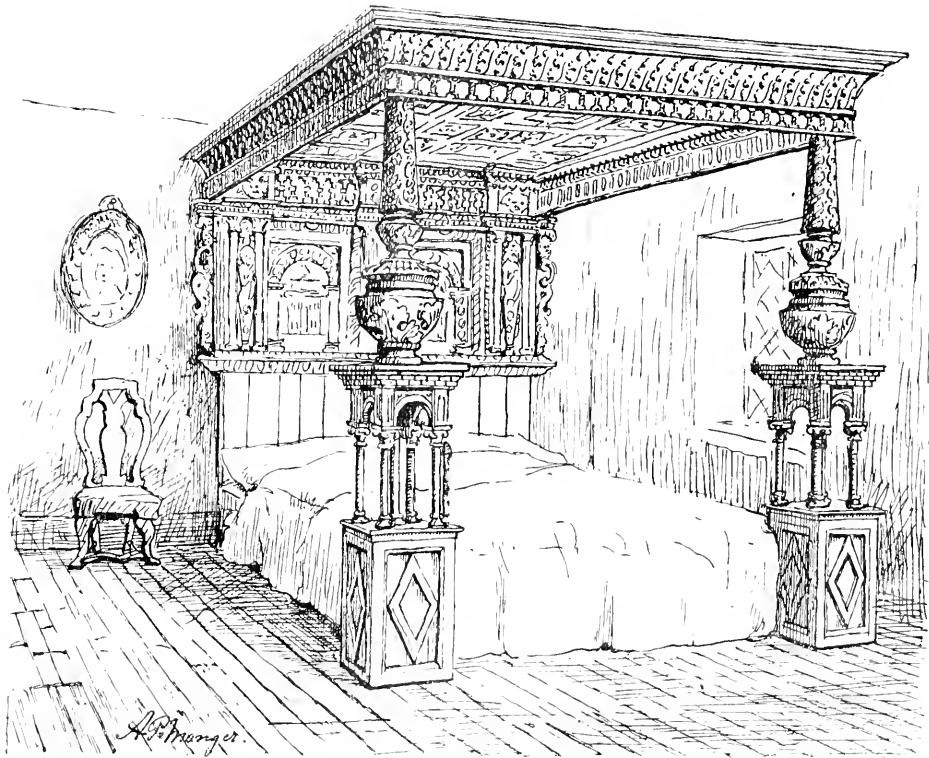
been heard of: the common light for the great hall was the resin torch; for the private chamber the oil lamp; and the wick for this Nature supplied from the same source, as she did the substitute for carpets. Rushes were much in request. They were gathered and spread over the floors of halls and rooms, and sometimes they were not so often changed as they ought to have been, either for the sake of seemliness or for comfort and health. For an honoured guest the room was anew laid with rushes: for one who was hardly welcome but little regarded, the much used and often trod on had to suffice, hence the common phrase, "He is not worth a rush." Lilly, in one of his plays, says: "Strangers have green rushes, when daily guests are not worth a rush." In the "Taming of the Shrew," the question is asked, "Is supper ready, the house trimmed, rushes strewed, cobwebs swept?" In the



apparell, or traynes of gownes and kertles from dust. Rushes be olde courtiers, and, when they be nothing worth, then they be cast out of the doores, so be many that do treade upon them."

Domestic architecture was still backward, and it was often needful to have recourse to the division of rooms and the warding off of draughts by the hanging of tapestries, which also took the place of paper on the walls. The beds were a poor makeshift. They were indeed mere boxes for holding

bed, in those days, it could hardly be said that they lay down. The sofa-head prevented that. Then, even after bedsteads were invented, and no end of skill in decoration had been lavished upon them, the sleepers lay in bed without night-dress—that article of luxury (however necessary and common now) not having then been thought of. The sleepers took off their clothes, and the poorer ones used them as bed-clothes; and even with the richest, much that the poorest now considers



THE BED OF WARE.

straw, on which was placed the mattress; and for the servants' use in clearing them out was the bedstaff, which they learned to wield so deftly that 'the twinkling of a bedstaff' was a common phrase. We know nothing of the bedstaff now, and in place of staff we have post in the saying, "twinkling of a bed-post," which makes it meaningless. The wardrobe was a separate room; and, beyond a chair or two and a couple of oaken chests, there was not much else in an ordinary bedroom. The beds generally were in appearance more like a sofa with a head at one end for a pillow than anything else. When they went to

necessary was not then to be had. There were no sheets, properly speaking; nor was there any bolster—these being refinements that came very late—not, indeed, being known at all till the end of the thirteenth century, and not in general use till the end of the fourteenth. How odd it is to think that more than five thousand years, even according to Mosaic Chronology, elapsed before mankind reached the idea of a "proper bed," and of all the generations that passed without having known the comfort of well-arranged sheets and bolsters! Truly, we have much to be thankful for; and yet, perhaps, not so much as would ap-

pear. There are no such things on this earth as unmixed advantages.

There were, of course, no bells then, or means of communicating with a distant part of the house. Hence alongside each bed-chamber, for a person of any consequence, was an ante-chamber, where the confidential servant waited within easy call, if the door were opened.

If the earlier sleepers did not enjoy some of the luxuries that are commonplace and general with us, their want of constructive art in this department stood them in good stead. If they did not have sheets and bolsters, each at least had a "bed" to himself. The later developments soon ran into defiance of all the laws of health. No sooner did



people get the idea of a "four-poster" than they tried to excel each other, not in beauty so much as in bigness, till it is clear that whole families could have slept in one bed, if they did not actually do so. One of our historical beds is a valuable witness on this point. This is the bed of Ware. It was said to be capable of containing twelve persons, and tradition assigns it to Warwick, the king-maker. It is still preserved, we learn, in an inn at Ware, in Hertfordshire. It is more than twelve feet square, and has a remarkably curious and richly-carved back, which, by means of two massive pillars at the foot, supports a heavy canopy, enriched with elaborate carved work. Before the

time of Shakespeare, it was proverbial, for we find Sir Toby Belch, in "Twelfth Night," saying to Sir Andrew Aguecheek, about the writing of a certain letter: "It is no matter how witty, so it be eloquent and full of enocution; taunt him with the licence of ink; if thou thoust\* him some thrice it will not be amiss; and as many lies as will lie in thy sheet of paper, although the sheet were big enough for the bed of Ware, in England, set them down."

But this was the reaction from the mere sofa-headed bed of the time we are concerned with. Dr. Jessopp, in his "Coming of the Friars," is doubtful if many of the common people had beds at all, but simply lay down on straw or rushes.

Even in the great baronial halls and manor-houses, there were immense wide chimneys—all the villeins and dependents on certain occasions met and ate in the common hall, their place at the table being determined by their status, so that in those days, the pale spectrum of the salt, which Mrs. Barrett Browning speaks of in one of her poems, had a very real and practical meaning, though it is not likely that then any idea of degradation was associated with it. And in those days there were no forks, and but few knives—table-knives at all events. Lord Tennyson, in one of his "Idylls of the King," makes Earl Doorm's cheek "bulge with the unswallowed piece" even when he was just about to address himself to "Enid." By this he suggests more than he tells—the fingers had to do a good deal more in the process of feeding in those days than they have to do with us; and naturally the work of triturating the food was not always so carefully attended to.

In days much later than the period of the "Idylls," the manner in which a person ate out of the dish with the fingers was a mark of position or of culture. How do we know this? We know it from the records of literature most pleasantly; from the dry-as-dust historians less pleasantly. Chaucer affords us a naive and pretty proof that even in his time it was so; for he gives us this expressive and realistic passage in his portrait of "The Nonne Prioresse":—

\* From this it is clear that in the time of Shakespeare and earlier, as it is now in Germany, the *thou* is, in certain cases, used as a term of insult, as in the German "*Du bist ein knarr*," a formula to provoke a duel.

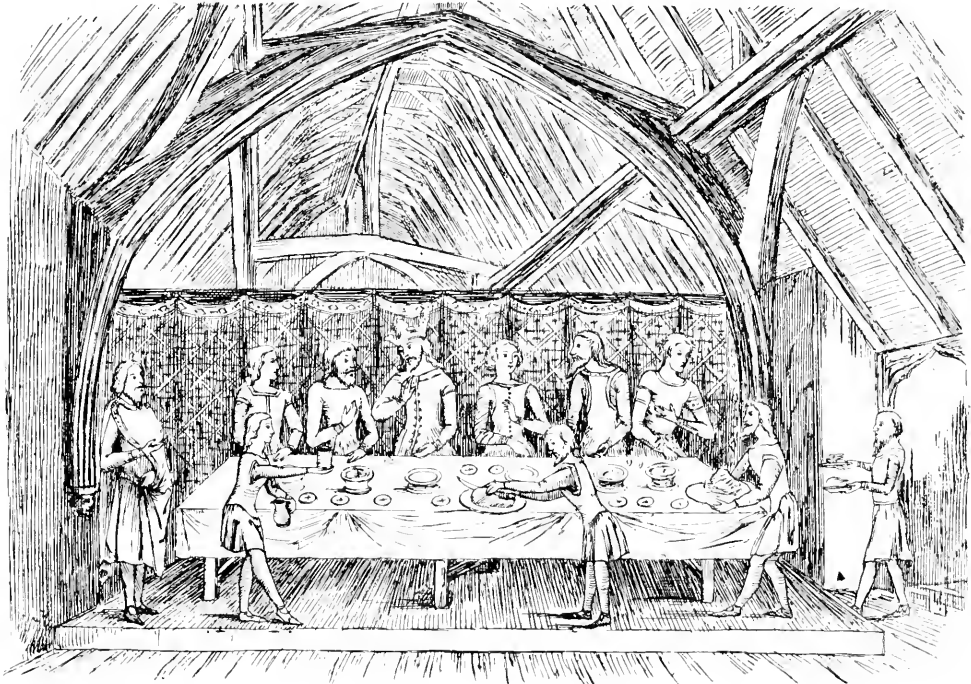
“ At meete well i-taught was sche withalle ;  
 Sche leet no morsel from her lippe falle,  
 Ne wette hire fingers in her sauce deepe  
 Wel cowde sche carrie a morsel and wel keepe,  
 That no droppe fil uppon hire brest,  
 In curtesie was sett al hire hest.  
 Hire overlippe wyped sche so elene  
 That in hire cuppe was no ferthing sene  
 Of grees, when sche dronken had hire draught.”

The directions for a lady's eating at table in these days are thus given:—

“ In eating you must avoid much laughing and talking. If you eat with another (*i.e.*, on the same plate or of the same mess), turn the nicest bit to him and do not go picking out the finest and

dinner-table—thin cakes of bread were often used as trenchers on which to cut the other meat. The glasses were limited too, for from the above it is clear that two persons or more drank from the same glass.

There were no such things as tables, as we understand them, but only boards set on trestles when wanted, and cleared away when done with. There were no chairs with backs, but only a kind of forms or stools; even the chairs of lords and ladies were without proper backs. The dining-hall was often turned into a bedroom at night by the simple expedient of stretching mattresses over the litter of rushes.



DINNER IN A BARONIAL HALL.

largest for yourself, which is not courteous. Moreover, no one should eat greedily a choice bit which is too large or too hot for fear of choking or burning herself. . . Each time you drink, wipe your mouth well, that no grease may go into the wine, which is very unpleasant to the person who drinks after you. But, when you wipe your mouth for drinking, do not wipe your eyes or nose with the table-cloth, and avoid spilling from your mouth or greasing your hands too much.”

The supply of dishes was limited, as may be seen by looking at a picture of the mediæval

Forks were not introduced into England till the fifteenth century, and Thomas Coryale, a gentleman who had travelled in Italy and become enamoured of the neat fashion which the Italians had got from the suggestion of the Chinese chopsticks, suffered a good deal of persecution and contemptuous treatment on his attempt to introduce them to his countrymen; but he persevered, and by-and-bye the improvement was accepted generally, though we are told that the great Queen Bess herself hesitated for a long while to adopt the fork; and when she did begin was very chary of

its use, and was not guiltless of falling back now and then on the fingers as the most effective aid to the spoon and knife.

At first the use of the fork was thought to be effeminate, and nothing more disconcerts Englishmen than the risk of being thought affected or effeminate. From what we are told by this same Thomas Coryale, we may infer that there was then in Italy, and probably also in England, much more of the Eastern fashion of sharing or eating out of the same dish. He says:—

“The Italian cannot by any means endure to have his dish touched with fingers, seeing all men’s fingers are not alike clean. . . . They do alway at their meales use a little fork when they cut their meate. For, while with the knife, which they hold in the one hand, they cut the meate out of the dish, they fasten their fork, which they hold in the other hand, upon the same dishe.”

With regard to the smaller houses, it is quite clear that little art had been gained for ventilation, or for light.

Such fire-places as they had in these houses were in no sense like those we love to sit and brood over. They were immense open spaces fitted for the burning of wood-fuel, often thrown into them in big logs; with no grate as we know it, and with rude iron dogs on which to support the burning logs or faggots, easily got from the woods that extended on every side, and imparted to large areas of country a sombre and even gloomy aspect. Even fairly well-to-do people never knew the luxury of clean walls, if even the barons did, for, through the lack of proper and well-constructed chimneys, and the soot being often driven backward instead of escaping into the air, they soon became black and dirty.

Stone was hard to find in many parts of England; hence wood was used for many parts of buildings now of stone or of brick, and the humblest houses were of wood, mud, wattle, and daub; and as there were no such things as plaster or papering, the walls were hard to keep smooth, not to say clean. In such humble houses there was no chimney at all—the smoke went out through a hole in the roof, and that, indeed, was almost the only source of light.

The very lack of skill in the construction of houses, the use of tapestry for warding off draughts, and for what was really the division of

large halls into small rooms—had a wonderful effect in the way of promoting the familiarity of intercourse of the various classes—masters and servants, mistresses and maids—in spite of the closeness of the “bonds” as laid down by law and custom. There could not be the same degree of privacy in many respects as is enjoyed in our time; by the mere necessity of the case, there was nearness, intimacy. A sense of identity of interest was thus developed in domestic relations. Sir Walter Scott, in his novels dealing with the middle-age period, has admirably seized and presented this aspect of the life and its effects in many ways, and the same thing, indeed, is revealed in the plays of Shakespeare as well as in the pages of Chaucer.

One of the worst points about them was that, mainly with an idea of protection from certain kinds of wild beasts which dislike water, they were protected by moats or ditches which made them damp. Add to the dampness the fact that there was in such houses really no chimney, but only a hole in the roof through which the smoke escaped; and you have an easy enough explanation of the fact that the good folks of those times preferred to be out rather than in their own houses; and that the life of all classes was very much more an open air one than it is with us. In essentials the castle of the baron or manorial hall was little better than the meanest hut; and for this reason, that it had primarily to be a place ready for defence—into which the family and fighting men could retreat, falling back from point to point till the *donjon* or keep was occupied. In it, the fiercest defiance and most eager fighting would be kept up. The castle or hall was then uncomfortable in great degree because it was a citadel, fitted to receive and to sustain fighting men; the poorer houses were uncomfortable because they were ill-built and needed to be secured against wild beasts by the cheapest and easiest of all such protections—water. What led the primitive men to build what are called pile dwellings—that is, houses erected on the top of piles driven deep into the bottoms of lakes—also led the people in these mediæval days to surround their houses with a moat or ditch.

As time went on, the art of architecture advanced, though slowly, and the sentiments of the people became more domestic. Mr. Freeman, the historian of the Norman Conquest, regards the

Donjon or Keep erected on the site of an older one at the famous Warkworth Castle—one of the old strongholds of the Percy family in Northumberland—by the son of the famous Hotspur in the



EARLY DONJON OR KEEP.

year 1454—as especially marking and illustrating this progress. He says significantly :—

“This keep, a work of the Percies of the second line, is a good study of the process by which the purely military castle gradually passed into the house fortified for any occasional emergency.”

The same process proceeded even with the smaller houses. As the necessity for protection against certain wild animals disappeared, as forests were cut down, so also did the style of structure improve. But that things were still in a very indifferent state in this respect, even in the time of Chaucer, is proved by the picture which he has given us of the house and garden and offices of the poor widow in the “Nonne-Priestes’ Tale.”

“Ful sooty was hir bour and eek hir halle,  
In which sche eet ful many a slender meal.”

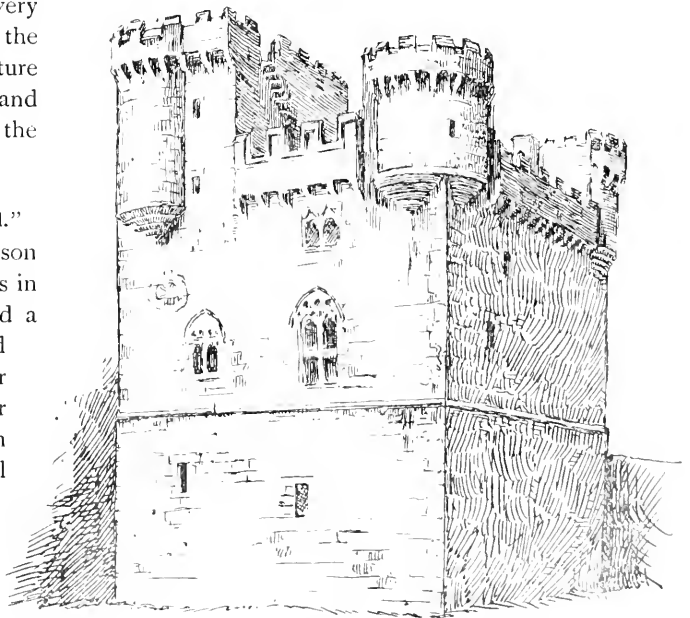
And yet, it is evident that she was a person of some little means. She had two rooms in her house—a halle, or eating-room, and a “bour” (*i.e.*, bower or bed-chamber), and round her house was a little yard or garden, which was defended, however poorly, by a ditch. If this was so, even in the case of a person who had some small property and aimed at some little refinement, how badly must the villeins and servants—the workers and tillers of the soil—have been in these respects in the days which have often

been named “the good old times” of “merrie England.”

Doubtless there was much merriment ; but it was too often rather uproarious—too much the sense of escape from a kind of slavery, and an implicit protest against the conditions of life. But in this even the great folks shared, and the barons had their “fools”—one of the most remarkable products of the middle-ages—who supplied the comedy at the great folks’ fireside or in the hall.

Instead of shops for the supply of things that were not produced on the ground there were the travelling merchants or pedlars, who really were also in those days the newsmen—the substitute for the printed sheet, and were welcomed as much for what they could tell about what was going on elsewhere as for the goods they brought : and then, to keep the Church in relation with all classes, there were the miracle-plays by which some of the marvels and mysteries of Christian theology were brought home to the bosoms and businesses of the crowd.

That the bad housing of the workers in these days sprang from no such cause as leads in too many cases to the bad housing of the poor in our time is evident on a moment’s reflection. The lords or barons had the very highest interest in keeping the people under them up to the very best



LATER DONJON OR KEEP.



possible physical condition. To say the least, they had the same interest in their health and bodily welfare as they had in their cattle and horses. They depended on them not only for the culture of their fields, &c., but for the military services which they were bound to do for the King at certain seasons, and in a crisis on being summoned to the King's side in war. And if the laws were strict as to the duties due from the villeins, they were strict also as to the duties due to them by the lords. Little, comparatively, was left then to arbitrary will: law and custom governed all. It is clear, therefore, that it was want of knowledge, and not want of will, on the part of the superiors, that led to the lack of such home comforts as we have spoken of.

Another point has to be noted. The conditions of agriculture then, as we infer it from such works

as Professor Thorold Rogers's "History of Agriculture in England," was very primitive, and women took such a part in it that at certain seasons, during spring ploughing, the hay and corn harvest more especially, they must have been very little in their houses. The plough was still of the primitive sort: it was drawn by oxen, and the peasant's wife, we are told, most frequently walked by him, "with a long goad, in a cutted cote, cutted full high." Not the most suitable or refining work for a woman, but this did not imply any special reducing of her to a chattel any more than in the case of the men.

Had the barons and knights known more, they would have, no doubt, acted differently. In this respect perhaps it may be said that the middle-ages were at least in no degree behind our own time.

## THE ETHICS OF DRESS.

BY LADY JEPHSON.

WANT of taste in dress has been, for years, a reproach cast at the typical Englishwoman. Foreign artists have caricatured her clothes, foreign journalists have derided them, and even home-grown specimens of both orders have unpatriotically laid the sin of bad dressing at her door.

Within the past ten years, however, a marvellous change for the better has set in. English women have improved in the cut of their clothes, in the neatness of their boots and gloves, the daintiness of their hats and bonnets, and the combination of their colours. But in proportion as their taste has improved, their expenditure has increased; and the masculine mind which deplored the want of taste, is equally alive to the sin of extravagance. Mr. Brown likes to see his wife prettily attired, but when the cost of dressing well comes into many figures, Mr. Brown prefers that someone else's wife should wear the clothes he admires. To spend recklessly, however rich, is foolishness; but to buy where you have not the money to pay is immorality.

The laws of decency and of comfort require that one should be clothed, and the laws of æstheti-

cism demand that the clothing should be in conformity with beauty. How to combine beauty and economy in the matter of garments is therefore a subject of moment to those women who recognise the importance of good dressing, and the still greater importance of preserving their self-respect by an avoidance of debt.

There is some excuse to be made for the *fin de siècle* Englishwoman as regards this charge of extravagance, if we take into account the fact that never has dress cost so much as at the present moment. One cannot suppose that the classic Chiton was a ruinously expensive garment, and it had the enormous merit (in addition to its undeniable beauty) of being applicable to all occasions. The Greek lady attended to the affairs of her household, and took her modicum of pleasure out of doors, in practically the same dress; whereas your modern fine dame must have as many costumes for different periods of the day and phases of life as an Englishman requires servants in India.

Time was when brocades and laces were worn on all occasions and at all hours of the day. Fashion dictates at the present moment that to be well dressed is to be suitably dressed, and to be suit-



ably dressed is to wear serge at Cowes, tweed on the Moors, and silks and laces and fine materials in London. Fashion goes further still in its arbitrariness and just now ordains that cottons and tailor-made gowns should be worn at the early morning walk in the Row; a smart walking-dress at mid-day, and so on—change, change, change, throughout the twenty-four hours. All this variety of apparel brings with it consequent expenses, yet what would be thought of her who wore Ascot gowns on board a yacht, or yachting clothes on the Moors!

That good dressing should be the prerogative of rich women, few women in moderate circumstances would care to admit. Nevertheless, at the present moment, when women have placed so much of their individuality in the hands of their dressmakers, we may take it for granted that money is the greatest factor in the art of dressing well.

It would be easy to dismiss the whole matter by resorting to the time-honoured expedient of quoting the Psalmist as an excuse for carelessness and disregard of dress. *No* woman, however, can afford to despise raiment. A love of dress carried to excess is demoralising, but a proper attention to dress is derogatory to no woman, however intellectual. That our clothing should be seemly and beautiful is but paying proper respect to the shrine of that spirit with which God has endowed us. And the art of good dressing comes no more by nature than do reading and writing, despite our old friend Dogberry. It is an art which may be cultivated as much as any other. The master-minds of Raphael and Titian thought it not unworthy of them to study details and effect of colouring and drapery in dress, as important factors in the beauty of their pictures. Why, therefore, should such study be beneath the attention of any gentlewoman? Where women will not exercise their own brains, however, and insist on throwing themselves blindly into the toils of a dressmaker, it follows of necessity that the dressmaker should be a good one. It is also to be hoped that she may be original, though, indeed, we know only too well that: "All originality is relative," and that, as Emerson says: "Rotation is the law of Nature." Be the dressmaker ever so much disposed to strike out for fresh ideas, she does not create, she evolves. "If we require the

originality which consists in weaving, like a spider, their web from their own bowels; in finding clay, and making bricks, and building the house—no great men are original." So it follows in humble as in great walks of life. What has gone before, and our knowledge of it, influences our thoughts and our imaginations. Will the "Marie Stuart" bonnet, the "Medici" ruff, the "Tudor" cloak, or the Alsatian bow, ever be forgotten? They have influenced the history of dress, and will continue to influence it, as much as "The Æneid" did Tasso in his "*Gerusalemme Liberata*," or Guido di Colonna, Chaucer.

Our knowledge of history and of painting ought therefore to help us materially in the study of dress, and it follows as a matter of course that the cultivated gentlewoman should excel in this art the illiterate and uneducated. I date in my mind the improvement in English dress from the time when ladies first thought the trade of dressmaking worthy of pursuit.

Unfortunately, however much the English lady dressmaker may possess capacity or ideas, her colleague belonging to a lower grade undoubtedly is inferior in imagination and delicacy to the *couturière* of the French *monde*. She may have originality and talent, but she lets them lie dormant, since she sends to Paris for her models, and blindly follows Lutetian modes. The English cook can roast his beef or baste his joint with the best of cooks, but when it comes to delicate flavouring and piquant sauces, he runs to his Soyer for inspiration, or else ruins his dish by too prodigal a use of what the French artist manipulates discreetly. So, in the matter of harmonious colouring, of delicate combinations, and subtleties of finish, the French *modiste* outshines the English one. With greater delicacy she combines a bolder fancy; it is as if she had laid to heart the second inscription on the Gates of Busyrane: "Be bold, be bold, and evermore be bold!" She has the wisdom to design for individual clients, and does not make a hundred dresses on the same pattern for a hundred different types of womanhood, as does the dressmaker of Mayfair. Incontestably the Paris *modiste* beats the English dressmaker, as the Paris *chef* does the English cook, out of the field.

Hence it comes about that the woman who pines for the distinction of being well dressed on

all occasions, and who will not exercise her own faculties on the subject, flies to Paris for her gowns. Equally as a matter of course follow huge bills, the righteous wrath of husbands, tears, distress, repentance, *more* dresses from Paris, concealment of debt, and gradual loss of self-respect.

The woman who orders her clothing in London fares little better, since English dresses from good dressmakers cost nearly as much as Paris ones. House rent, luxurious furnishing of show-rooms, and hire of "hands," must be paid before the dressmaker has a chance of making a profit, and nothing but high charges enable her to live and thrive.

It becomes, therefore, a problem to the woman whose means are limited, and who goes much into Society, to know how to dress well and keep clear of debt. How to satisfy the claims of æstheticism and appropriateness and yet avoid the bills! We can imagine the sufferings of Damocles when the sword of Dionysius was suspended over his head. Who has not known more than one parallel of suffering where you could substitute a "Worth bill" for the sword of Dionysius, and the name of a fine lady for that of Damocles?

The best solution of the question seems to me a combination among sensible women against the excessive quantity of clothes at present required. If a woman have artistic instincts and perceptions she will not (nay, she *can*-not) wear an ugly gown. Once, however, that she has chosen a beautiful article she ought not to object to wear it often, and it is only moral cowardice which prevents her doing so. There is no necessity to resort to platitudes and to quote Tupper in support of my argument. If a thing be charming in itself it cannot be made less so by being often seen. The custom of wearing a fresh gown each day at Ascot Races does not necessarily make a woman look better, and it assuredly leads her into terrible pitfalls. To make of one's person a lay figure for the exhibition of toilettes is to degrade that person. Dress ought to be subordinate, and expressive of one's individuality, not assertive and claiming attention before one's face and figure. Few women are brave enough to wear their Ascot gowns at Goodwood, and Cowes is yet another danger to the extravagant woman. The famous "week," instead of proving a time for honest sport and health-giving recreation, is now turned into an occasion for display and rivalry in the matter of costume.

All this is wrong and morally unhealthy! We must have clothes, therefore, by all means let them be beautiful, but the claims of beauty do not require endless variety and reckless expenditure. Our great-grandmothers looked as well in their brocades and muslin kerchiefs, worn from year to year on all occasions, as we do in our incessant changes of apparel.

Economy in the matter of dress should be in the *quantity* of our garments, not in their *quality*. No woman of refinement would wear cheap or common materials. Cotton-backed velvets, shiny silks, and imitation lace are odious, and ought to be repugnant to the feelings of well-bred women. Under-linen should be of the finest, and even cotton and woollen gowns of the best quality. The Venetian Republic ordained that only Patricians should array themselves in silks and velvets. Happily a well-bred woman is not, now-a-days, dependent upon the gorgeousness of her attire for identification. She is dependent, to a certain extent, upon the reality of its richness, since no lady could wear imitation stones and respect herself. A great economy may be effected by having one's clothes made at home. No doubt the creative and imaginative power is possessed by many intelligent women of the upper classes, but the executive capacity to carry out ideas is lacking in their maids. There is also a *coupe Anglaise* which is the reverse of beautiful, and a *coupe Française* which is distractingly becoming.

Few women succeed in amateur dressmaking. The result of amateur work as regards dressing stands in the same relation to the artistic work of a first-rate firm as the laboured productions of a school-miss expended on a door-panel to the exquisitely decorative creations of Benozzo Gozzoli. Until dressmaking in its details is taught in a proper school, and maids and small dressmakers are obliged to gain certificates of merit before being admitted to situations, one cannot regard home-dressmaking as a way out of the difficulty. The remedy for the appalling extravagance in dress which ruins so many homes is none the less in every woman's hands. One of three courses is open to her of limited means:—

To be well and appropriately dressed, *but have few clothes and wear them often*,—

To have recourse to cheap materials and bad dressmakers, or—

To be well gowned and display a variety of toilettes, but to this end plunge deeper and deeper into debt, the extrication from which becomes more hopeless every year.

No right-minded woman can hesitate between these alternatives. The Primrose League has shewn what unity of purpose among women will do. If women would band together with the same determination and tenacity of purpose to resist this ever-increasing evil of frightful extravagance in dress; to withstand the allurements of

constant novelty and limit the amount of clothes to the proportion of dress allowance — then, indeed, a happier state of things might be foreshadowed. As it is now-a-days, many a woman begins a life-long unhappiness by acts of sheer foolishness and weakness, is led on by vanity and cowardice, and ends in depths of extravagance which lead eventually to the loss of all probity and self-respect. "There is only one appointed way of doing good, and that is by being good."

## A COSTLY FREAK.

BY MAXWELL GRAY,

*Author of "The Silence of Dean Maitland."*

### CHAPTER XIV. (*continued*).

Even Mr. Ray had been beguiled out of doors by that sweet spring morning, though no further than to the small kitchen garden at the back of the house, where he walked in a portion screened by fruit-trees, invisible to neighbours, and wistfully watched a bee intoxicating itself with self-satisfied buzzings in plum-blossoms on the wall, or looked at a row of peas that sadly wanted sticking. But no one had the heart to attend to the garden in these days, and, instead of sticking the peas, he presently turned back to the house, his head more bowed and his face more dejected than before.

Here, before the kitchen door, he caught sight of a hatchet lying by a wooden block, and saw that some one had been trying, and awkwardly trying, to chop fire wood—a small function he usually performed but had neglected in his recent trouble—so taking off his coat, he took up the hatchet and began splitting the wood lying near.

The kitchen door stood open; a sweet, pungent smell of fresh wood smoke stole out on the sunny air; he could hear Bella clattering about and up-setting things with her accustomed energy within, and see his wife sitting at the table peeling and slicing onions with dainty care and precision and giving directions and gentle rebukes to the impetuous handmaiden at intervals. When Mrs. Ray heard the familiar chop, chop, upon the

wooden block outside, she looked up with a faintly dawning radiance on her sad face, pleased to see her husband in his old place, but she did not say anything as she would have done in happier days; it daily became more difficult for these two to converse in the sad silence the one bitter and never forgotten subject compelled.

The exertion soon told on his unaccustomed muscles, and he was glad to pause and dry his face with his handkerchief; but the effort had done him good morally and physically; the rhythmic strokes of the chopper, mingled with the homely sounds and scents from the open kitchen, had summoned old associations of times, the happiness of which, seen by the light of present things, filled him with heart-sick longings.

This wood-chopping had been a wholesome and, on the whole, pleasant duty, often taken up of a wet day as a relief to study; it had afforded opportunities of tranquil converse between husband and wife and helped to banish many worries and perplexities; it had produced a healthy, physical glow that rested and soothed the tired brain and brightened the spirits. And yet he had never known the blessedness of it till now. He had sometimes murmured at a lot which, if lowly and toilsome, had been very sweet and peaceful. Many a time when sitting there at the homely hand work which, after all, is so much more manly and dignified than half the occupations of civilized man,

and during which so many useful and felicitous thoughts had come to him, and seeing his wife busied in the much serving he had rebuked as excessive, he had thought it hard that they, and especially that she, his chosen wife, of a station superior to his, should be compelled to perform tasks to which they had been neither born nor bred. Soon even these lowly occupations would fail them; there would be no more onions to peel, no more wood to chop, the homeliest necessities would be lacking, in the dark future on which he dreaded to look. Now truly he felt the sweetness and warmth of those hours of trivial household tasks, pursued side by side in the confidence of warm, long-trying affection. Why had he murmured at days he would now give worlds to recall, days he might nevermore know? He, more than his Martha, had been careful and troubled about many things. Troubled over much about the poor boy, whom he could no longer even shelter, and who had passed, without leave or license of his, from his care into that of strangers. Would they tell Walter? He must sooner or later know something of the misery.

Yes, the days before that terrible answer to prayer had been sweet—after all, so little makes days sweet—and they were taken from him for his sins. Not so would he have scourged his son for any sin; there was then, perhaps, no Heavenly Father, but only a jealous God, extreme to mark what is done amiss—or—nothing—blank, blind infinity of space—an eternal silence and darkness, a vast loneliness, infinite, pitiless, unending.

He took up the bill-hook and chopped fiercely, to chase away the desolating thought, and Mrs. Ray, incommoded by the pungent odour of the priceless but unhonoured bulb she was gingerly manipulating, was again cheered by the familiar tune on the wood-block. She too had been contemplating the probability of having no more onions to slice in the immediate future, and blankly wondering how it would be possible to live, for though they had so little to lose, it would be difficult to do with less. To-morrow, oh! to-morrow might find the grey head lying dishonoured in a prison. And yet all was so sweet and sunny, nature so joyous, the spring-touched earth so fair. The kitten, tired of gambolling to an unappreciating audience, was lying languidly stretched in the sunshine, its head on one side, its eyes dreamily closed, sedate, blissful, brooding on the insoluble

mysteries of the universe, a picture of inscrutable Fate in repose. If Fate would but always be still thus and leave mankind their poor little joys in peace, Mr. Ray thought as he gathered his pile or chopped wood together in the proper place and prepared to begin upon some more.

The kitten stretched itself with a loving wink and a little happy croon of friendship—the kitchen sounds floated out.

"Nobody ain't a-going to listen to the local demon," Bella said defiantly, as she brought some raw meat and slapped it down upon the table before her mistress, "'taint no good for he to go about the perish."

"What do you mean, Bella?" came in Mrs. Ray's soft, subdued tones.

"Why, this yer local demon Mr. Burroughes and they got down instead of master," Bella explained, "I heared en last Sunday at church. *He* can't preach no sense. Mrs. Bruckles, she don't go to Cottage Leckshures no more now. 'I aint a-going to listen to no local demons because they tell lies about master,' she sez. This yer local demon, he's over in the perishing room now. I seen en go in. He won't hev nothen to do with dissenters, he sez 'taint worth while for he to say nothen to they, they'm bound to go to hell without."

"Bella! Bella!" censured Mrs. Ray; but vaguely apprehending the handmaiden's chatter with a mind busied in weighing the exactly judicious amount of salt to put in the stew-pan.

"His bishopric shall another take," Mr. Ray said to himself. He remembered a certain young clerical stranger, unmistakably bearing the High Church *cachet*, whom he had seen passing the window, and who was, no doubt, the *locum tenens* so strongly contemned by the faithful Bella. Might not Burroughes at least have waited till he was gone, before putting another in his place? No more wood was chopped that morning, and all the kitten's lazy attempts to attract caresses were disregarded.

Now just as Bella quoted the weighty utterance of Mrs. Bruckles concerning parish arrangements, Millie, sitting in the Little Buckley schoolroom, ruling slates, startled her pupils by suddenly pronouncing aloud, as though it were a joyous invocation or charm, the name of that worthy matron.

"Who is Mrs. Bruckles?" the little Lusters

asked, charmed with an excuse for conversation of a non-scholastic nature.

"Hush! dears, I was thinking aloud," replied Millie, whose eyes were very bright and her cheeks very pink with secret joy, "Mrs. Bruckles is our charwoman, she comes every Saturday morning for an hour."

When she came to think of it all afterwards, she wondered at her stupidity in not seeing the clue to the mystery from the first. But even the thought of Mrs. Bruckles did not unriddle the mystery at once, it was not until she had left her pupils and was hastening home that the full light shone upon her.

She had taken out a letter of Walter's, read hurriedly and with divided attention in the busy morning, to read again at leisure. The delights of sunny Bournemouth, the continued kindness of Maud Ascott's friends—who took him for drives, lent him books, gave him flowers and fruit—his strong suspicion that the friend whose unoccupied apartments he was living in was no other than Miss Ascott herself, from some unguarded words of the nurse—"a stunning girl, who was trained at Guy's with Ethel and knows her very well"—all this Millie read without excitement until she came to this: "Nurse says I must break Buffie of picking people's pockets, or he'll get into a scrape. We found the doctor's stethoscope twice behind the window curtain, where the little beggar must have put it. Nurse always watches him now, and caught him dragging some chocolates out of Bruce Ascott's great-coat pocket, and smacked him well—not Ascott—Buffie. Hard lines for poor Buff!"

"Oh! Buffie!" gasped Millie, "the mischief you have done!"

## CHAPTER XV.

As the day wore on, deeper anguish settled upon Mr. Ray, and his wife's face grew more and more wistful with vain desire to comfort him. For it was the last day.

Millie, instead of coming home at the end of her labours as usual, sent a message by a young Bruckles to the effect that she might not return for some hours, and the husband and wife took their tea alone together in silence, the aching heart of the woman expressing itself in default

of words in the homely guise of tea of extra strength and superior quality.

Then Mr. Ray, for the first time since that sad home-coming from the magisterial enquiry, went out alone.

"I may not return till late, dear Edith," he said, "Do not sit up for me. Good-night."

"Good-night," she faltered, dreading for the moment lest this might mean Good-bye.

She held the door open and waited a little, watching the tall bent figure pass slowly away in the golden light of the spring evening; but she observed that he took the turning that led to the church, and remembered that he had once passed a whole night there at a time of trouble, when they lost their little daughter, the pretty blue-eyed Edith, who came next to Walter and was buried in Freshford churchyard soon after their arrival. It pleased her that he should go there, whether for penitence or consolation; for trouble such as she supposed to be his sometimes ends in a way that made her tremble to think of.

As Mr. Ray walked along, slowly and alone, his trouble grew so heavy he forgot that it was his first appearance, since his disgrace, in the face of open day, and he scarcely remarked that a labourer, coming home from work, touched his hat to him as usual, yet he had shrunk from going out lest such salutations should be denied him.

Yet his poorer parishioners had not left him quite alone in his trouble. One had brought a jar of honey from her garden hives, others home-baked cakes, early vegetables, flowers, kind messages; none had been admitted to see him.

It was only when, in passing by the White Hart, he saw a young labourer, one of his Bible Class, stump heavily out with dulled eyes, stupid face and an unholy roll in his gait, that he realized his position. At first sight of this wandering sheep, he instinctively paused and was about to address some words of rebuke to him, but he recollected that, in the eyes of his flock, he had gone infinitely further astray himself, and passed on with a drooping head, suddenly aware of curious faces watching him from windows and doors.

Self-respect alone curbed the swift impulse to hasten on and hide himself in the church, and, pacing sedately on, he was glad to disappear at last within the shadow of the churchyard elms.

The church was empty and closed, the dial over

the south porch told the last sunshiny hour with a long, sharp-cut, velvety shadow, the black bier was lost in shade beneath it and the fretted stone cross rose golden in the sunshine above. They had left him his own key; they did not, he reflected bitterly, judge him capable of stealing the church plate or robbing the alms box. He opened the vestry door, and, having let himself in, shut and locked it from the inside. How often he had let himself in by that well-known heavy door, made of solid oak planks, embossed with great nail-heads and crossed by long foliated iron hinges, the creaking of which, as they turned, was as the voice of an old familiar friend. And never, his conscience told him, had he entered lightly or without due preparation and earnest purpose.

A few things of his lay about just as he had left them a month back; opening a press, he saw, depending each from its peg like so many misdemendant and gibbeted clergymen, his own cassock and surplice, that of the rector, and on the third peg an unfamiliar cassock and surplice, both of the newest Anglican cut, doubtless the property of Bella's local demon. The sight of these vestments touched him keenly, for it is very hard to see another occupying the post from which one is pushed, and his pale eyes clouded. Nevermore could he don those seemly vestments and enter the church meekly in silent prayer to minister, to the best of his power, to the waiting congregation of people he knew and loved and had so long known and loved. Nevermore could he minister to any congregation or in any way exercise the calling for which he had been set apart and to which he had devoted himself; he was cast away, rejected by the great Taskmaster as a broken, worthless tool. That was the keenest sting, that is what we all feel most acutely, to be

"Lost to life and use and name and fame,"

pitied, in pathetically unconscious egoism, the poor world that must stumble on blindly without our mighty aid. Unmerited disgrace, punishment, even the pain of dearest friends' unjust judgment, was nothing to this.

That is to say, as far as he was personally concerned, for he grieved continually over the wrecked lives for which he was responsible, and most of all over the blighting of Millie's bright young hopes so near their fruition.

He closed the press and went into the church, where the side aisles were dim with shadow and the nave and chancel filled with a torrent of soft sunshine pouring through the west window and making the brazen crucifix and vases on the altar and the gold embroidery of the frontal burn with live lustre, which grew softer and faded beneath his gaze, leaving the whole church dim and shadowy.

Nevermore might he minister there. He looked at the empty pulpit and remembered the sermon he had preached the day after the finding of those notes, in the great exaltation and fervour of his thankful soul, and a lump rose chokingly in his throat and his eyes were scalded with hot salt tears. Was it just to cast him away for an error of unworldliness, of excess of fervour? Had he then cleansed his heart in vain and washed his hands in innocency? When had he erred, save in weakness and ignorance, through all those years of faithful service? Yet the slothful, the worldly, and the covetous were left in peace and honour, he alone was stricken and rejected, he and those innocent and beloved ones dependent upon his weak and ageing arm.

He crept into a seat in a corner formed by the junction of four pillars crossing at right angles, bowed his face on his hands and wept, and darkness fell upon him.

He must have slept, for presently the boom of the organ, that seemed to have been sounding for a long time, was interrupted by the ecstatic and piercing musical cry, in a tenor voice, of—

"Lo! I see the Heavens opened . . . and the Son of Man . . ."

And, looking up, he saw the chancel filled with light, and the choir in their places.

Then the tenor recitative died away with the divine name on a deep, awe-struck, long-sustained note, and with the soft flute-stop on the choir-organ arose a sweet and heavenly melody, soon taken up by a clear and rich soprano, singing, as from far celestial heights of sunny purity, the divine heart-piercing reproach: "Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee." Then followed in a melodic phrase of exquisitely tender pathos: "How often would I have gathered thy children unto Me . . . and ye would not."

His heart stood still to listen all through the aria till the last "Jerusalem!" rang purely

and sunnily out and died away in mournful, melodious reproach, and the organ echoed the soft pure melody with a dying sweetness that seemed to linger upon the silence its ending created. He had read and quoted and preached on those familiar words all his life long, but he had never fully felt them till now, their inner meaning revealed by Mendelssohn's music and Willie Frankland's pure child-voice.

There was then another ministry than that to which he was vowed—the ministry of Art.

He had been narrow; he had been vexed with Burroughes' enthusiasm for the beautiful voice of this farmer's son, and angry at the trouble taken to train and secure it for the church, and especially scandalized at the notion of solo-singing there—puffing the boy up with vanity, turning the church into an opera-house. Yes, he had been narrow and self-opinionated, he had hindered where he should have helped.

After a brief, quivering silence, the great and the pedal organs spoke out boldly, and a strong, heart-stirring phrase was sung by trebles, altos, tenors, and basses, one after the other, in melodious succession, "Happy — happy — happy — and blest are they," till the musical chase was done, the phrase completed, and the chorus thundered out, as with the voice of many waters, "And blest are they who have endured." Then, more slowly, the solemn, soft, and awe-filled phrasing of the chorussed, "For, though the body die, the soul shall live for ever."

It was only Freshford choir rehearsing with errors and imperfections manifold; but they sang Mendelssohn's music to divine thoughts, and that Mr. Ray heard, not the repetitions and amendments of difficult passages, and his soul was filled with a great calm, and he sat alone in the shadows, scarcely conscious of his existence, till the last note of the organ trembled into silence, the lights went out one by one, choir and organist melted quietly away, and the great, grey, echoing church was empty again.

He might have thought it all a dream or vision sent to comfort him but for the very real and prosaic sounds of footsteps going away, the rattle of closing and locking the organ, and the well-known clang and creak of the door as it was shut and slowly and safely locked from the outside.

Long bars of moon-light, variously dyed by the

bright raiment of apostles and angels, slanted through the east window and shot athwart the chancel arches with a beautiful and mysterious effect; they lessened as they slanted till they became mere splashes on the window-mullions, and so passed, leaving the great silent church full of massed gloom, faintly indicated by the glimmering of starred sky set in tracery of unstained windows.

The clock struck more than once, waking long-lingering echoes among the arches, but Mr. Ray did not move from the angle of the intersecting pillars, where the shadow was blackest, so thickly black it might almost have been cut with a knife.

But at last he rose and felt his way through the blackness of the shadowed church to the blinder blackness of the vestry, and, after a little fumbling, to the door, and thence out among the graves, faintly indicated by the dim glimmer of their headstones. The world was very still, all the lights in the village quenched, the houses lay silent, with never a smoke-curl, beneath the vast blue-black, over-arching dome that was alive and palpitating with stars. He paused at the lych-gate and turned to look at the dim grey mass of the church, faintly seen in the star-light.

It was a fine old church and he loved it and took an honest pride in its beauty. "*Vale!*" he said, softly, removing his hat for a moment, and the belfry clock chimed the first quarter past, as if in reply.

Just then a cock crew, and he remembered St. Peter. Perhaps his refusal to speak of the answer to his presumptuous prayer was a virtual denial. He would tell all.

Leaving the village, he climbed the velvet slope of the down. A soft air was stirring there, though below the night was breathless, dew was falling beneath the clear sky, but it was not cold, early though the season was. As he slowly mounted the steep slope, with the balmy night air upon his face, he heard nothing but the tinkle of sheep-bells in the distance, till he came where—

"All wan with traversing the night,  
Upon the desolate verge of light,  
Yearned loud the iron-bosomed sea."

Yet not very loud, but with a deep, soft, musical boom, very restful and bearing calm into the deepest recesses of his heart.

"Here shall thy proud waves be stayed," he

mused, looking down on the leaping surf, gleaming white at the cliff-base, and on the pale creaming of gently pulsing waves on dim sands in the bay. Lifting his eyes, he saw the glorious constellations quivering like fiery pulses above him. "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?" his memory murmured. Then, with a mighty rush, the magnificent music of that ancient and most sublime poem, the Job book, swept through the chambers of his memory, waking immortal echoes from his soul, until, like Job, in the presence of eloquent, dumb nature, who yet spoke in the immensity of the great, gray, restless sea, and the vastness of the infinite star-strewn void, his soul bowed down, he abhorred himself, repenting in dust and ashes, and saying, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee."

He stood long tranced in ecstatic thought, until the chill of approaching dawn compelled him to move, and brought him down to the level of his sorrows again.

Shame and total earthly ruin would, without doubt, be his: to-morrow night, instead of that sweet blue arch fretted with innumerable star fires, a prison roof would be above his head; his wife would be worse than widowed, his children worse than orphaned, his poor, helpless boy—but it would be the will of the All-Merciful, the All-Loving; a better shelter than that of his feeble arm and failing brain would be theirs; while for himself, why shrink from unmerited shame and punishment? The great surge of the chorus, "Happy and blest are they who have endured," rose upon the roar of rollers breaking on the hidden reef, and with the softer boom of the surf below mingled the solemn strain, "For though the body die, the soul shall live for ever."

He had indeed sinned in his faithless shrinking from pain and shame; he would sin no more. Deeper and deeper grew the calm in his hushed soul, stronger and stronger his trust and immortal hope, as he moved beneath the vast arch of sparkling stars, and heard the echoes of Mendelssohn's music borne upon the surge of the solemn sea below. Was it possible that he had fretted and grieved so deeply over the trouble and misery of this fleeting life; that he had been careful about many things, when but one thing was needful; troubled about the little work he had been per-

mitted to begin in his parish when that work could so well, perhaps so much better, be done without him; murmuring over his child's affliction, and not considering the mightier love that judged it fit; repining because of the sorrow and shame the answer to his passionate prayer had brought? What? he could be uplifted over that great sign of heavenly favour and yet murmur that it humbled him in the sight of men? Shame on you, William Ray, shame! Where is your faith? "I believe in you, father, in spite of appearances," his child had said, but he had doubted his Heavenly Father. Yes, the prayer *had* been answered; the boy was daily gaining health, friends were springing up on every hand to help him; was it his to question how?

Thus Mr. Ray abhorred himself and repented in dust and ashes, while the stars grew faint and few, as the great constellations wheeled past in stately march, the gray pallor in the east broadened, a violet flush mounted to the zenith, disclosing a heart of warmest rose, in the very centre of which was a core of burning gold.

Now the broad bosom of the sea was trembling in rose and purple, its level rim dark and firm against a salmon-tinted sky. A long, undulating headland, sloping brokenly down with infinite grace till it became a mere line, striking far into the sea, with a furrow of silver surf falling away from it, stretched in dark, velvety gloom between the sea and the eastern sky, which glowed with ever deepening intensity, until at last the confused blaze behind the headland globed itself in flame, the sea heaved in stronger pulsations, receiving ever-widening breadths of crimson and golden glory, and then, with a visible bound, like some young and joyous living creature, the broad, burning disc leapt above the dark headland and pillowed its chin upon its soft velvet, violet gloom, and all the waves laughed under a little breeze.

Then Mr. Ray turned homewards, leaving the glory behind him, and descended the down, his shadow falling in long-drawn lines before him, tremulous on the dewy turf as he moved. And then he became aware of the song of many birds making sweet concert with the rhythmic boom of the rosy surf, of blue smoke pillars rising from the wakening village below, and all the fresh beauty, the balm and glory, of the spring morning entered his heart, and the unspeakable charm of sunshine



upon grass and young leaf-buds touched him healingly.

His wife, roused from the deep morning sleep that often follows a night of waking, by the sound of his entrance, was almost startled by the radiance on his face when he stood before her, the grey hair touched with golden glory of morning sun-light, the pale blue eyes clear and bright and no sign of weariness in the thin, tall figure.

"William," she cried, "dear William, has it all been a dream?"

"There have been dreams, dear Edith, bad dreams, and dark shadows," he replied, "but the day breaks and the shadows flee."

Then he told her all, repenting his withheld confidence as she repented her want of faith, and they were very, very happy.

## CHAPTER XVI.

AFTER all, George Burroughes reflected, the handkerchief with its scraps of the missing banknote, and its marks of claws and teeth, pointed only to a partial exculpation. He saw it all in his mind's eye, and the thing was very piteous to him.

That thrice-cursed case slipping out of his pocket with his handkerchief, unnoticed in the dimly-lighted room, the fluttering of the flimsy notes, their discovery by the poor troubled man in his hour of need, his tampering with his conscience under stress of necessity. He might at first have accepted their unaccountable appearance as a veritable God-send, as he told his poor child—innocent, loyal-hearted Millie. Then, when the letter-case put their origin and ownership beyond doubt, he might have been too weak to accept the bitter disappointment, reasoning with himself that Burroughes did not need and would scarcely miss them, justifying the means by the end, hushing his conscience to uneasy slumber, by all sorts of narcotic sophistries and casuistic opiates, till, perhaps, he might have ended by believing in his own self-delusion—poor, poor, old man! There was at times, George fancied, a singular brightness in his eye, that glitter of religious mania often seen at revival meetings. *Evans* were much given to that kind of thing, he thought, and he had little faith in the mental balance of a thorough-paced disciple of that school.

Yes, he thought he saw it all, with sorrow and infinite pity, it is true, but he saw it. Others, notably a jury, would see it in a harsher, cruder light. Millie's father! and Millie would cleave to her father and stand by him through thick and thin, there was no doubt about that. She would turn a mangle or scrub floors for him, but she would not leave him. Her life was utterly, hopelessly wrecked; his own for ever darkened: they could never come together. And Millie so sweet, so young!

"George!" cried a joyous, excited voice, as a hurricane in petticoats burst into the sacred precincts of his hitherto inviolate study, and interrupted these melancholy musings. "O George! Millie has got the clue at last. It's Mrs. Bruckles!"

"Mrs. who?" groaned the afflicted rector. "For pity's sake, Maud, preserve me from all the old women of the parish. Don't hit a fellow when he's down. Look here! I've had about as much as I can stand. I wish the whole blessed thing was at an end and I comfortably tucked up under the daisies."

"Oh, you great coward! Comfortably tucked up, indeed! Now, isn't that just like a man? It's little tucking up you'll get, yet awhile. How you men fight and kick against Fate! No wonder Millie Ray won't have you, she likes pluck," was the acid rejoinder, while George rose and walked to the window, where he drew up a blind very carefully.

"Now you've spit it all out I hope you feel better," he observed, with an air of resignation. "It's a pity you couldn't have made up your mind to marry me the last time I asked you, Maud. To hear you scold, people would think me your husband, my dear."

He was too busy with his blinds, and picking up a fishing-rod he had upset on his path to the window, to observe the sudden pallor in her face and the way in which she put her hand to her side with a faint gasp.

"George!" she faltered, in a voice that sounded strange to each of them, "you *never* asked me."

"Not in words," he replied, turning sharply, and looking straight into the soft heartsease eyes, all wide with pain, "you are far and away too clever to let a fellow—why, Maud!"

"Oh! do be quiet," she cried, pressing her lips

together, "can't you see I've lost my breath? I was in a hurry and ran."

A very queer sensation came over George; his own breath had a catch in it, and the veins in his temples throbbed. He turned away, leant his arm on the chimney-piece, and looked down into the fire, biting his under-lip savagely. A wild thought leapt, with rapturous promise, through him. He paused, knowing that his fate trembled in the moment's balance. How was Maud looking in that throbbing silence? "You played with me," he was about to reproach, when certain soft and innocent brown eyes came before his fancy. "Cur!" he said to himself. He was roused by his cousin's gay and musical laugh.

"Indigestion at last," she explained, "but I believe it's inherited, not earned, like my uncle's gout. Oh, don't talk to me of stewed kidneys. Though the gods do make whips of our pleasant vices——"

"*You* mustn't be scourged, Maud. I wish you could have all the—sugar-plums and I—all the—ah! the black draughts!" he burst out, with a small shake in his voice.

"Unjust; besides, you've enough to do with your own sins. Now, about Mrs. Bruckles. George, no mortal eye but hers saw that letter-case till the police found it in the drawer."

"Well!" he said, at the end of the story she told him of the fresh evidence brought to light, "so it was just a bit of careless fun, a thoughtless freak."

"A costly freak," she added. "Freaks often are costly. What! is Maud also among the prophets? Not a bit of it. Oh, George! Those wedding-bells will ring."

"Ah! but will the jury see it in a proper light?" he asked.

The day on which Mr. Ray saw the sunrise from the dawn was to solve that question once for all. Millie wondered at her father's serenity when she wished him good-morning at their early breakfast. She observed that he had dressed with care in his freshest clothes, and ate heartily, pressing her to do the same in view of the journey and tiring day before them. When they were in the train, he talked cheerfully, as he had not done since the night of his arrest, pointing out objects of interest along the road and remarking upon the rare

beauty and summer-like warmth of the late March day. As they drew near to the assize town, he began to speak of his trial and probable sentence, advising her what to do on his conviction, and commending her mother and brother to her care.

A trouble so unusual and so unexpected, he said, had tried him sorely, and severely exercised his faith, so that he had murmured in his heart and sinfully repined. He had not remembered that the ways of the Infinite must of necessity be unsearchable and past understanding to man, the finite. Hard, very hard, it had been to be the means of bringing reproach upon his high calling, hard to have to give up the work of his life, hard and bitter to bring sorrow and shame on those dear to him. But he was a sinful man, and merited chastisement, and, above all, it was the will of God. Millie must remember that they had all been created expressly to do that will, and that, except by such doing, no happiness could come to man. For himself, he esteemed this loving correction a high honour and happiness.

"Stone walls do not a prison make,  
Nor iron bars a cage."

"But," he said, in conclusion, "you are young, Millie, and—poor Millie! poor child!"

In his simplicity, Mr. Ray saw himself preaching to his fellow-prisoners, chosen by this misfortune to bear the Gospel to those lost ones; and this hope he confided to his daughter, who did not question it, but looked at him with a silent and tender veneration, herself elated by an earthlier and more solidly-founded hope.

He would have them walk from the station, so that they might have a good view of the interesting old town, for Millie might not again have the opportunity of seeing it for some time. So they walked through the close, under the shadow of the grand cathedral, massive and still, in which he had been ordained, under the budded lime-trees, whose boughs were warm crimson, studded with vividest young sunlit green, past the college, through the narrow, old-fashioned streets, beginning to fill with busy life in the early forenoon, and beneath the beautiful Gothic cross left behind by the dim centuries. He enjoyed it all with the zest of a child on a holiday jaunt, but Millie, tired already by the excitement and late hours of the night before, had much difficulty in showing due interest in responding to his eager efforts to amuse

her, and became sadly confused in her archaeology and dates, as her heart thumped more and more painfully with the vision of her father in the dock. But Bella, who, to Mr. Ray's great mystification, had appeared, radiant and open-mouthed, in company with Mrs. Bruckles, even more radiant and important, at the railway station, amply made up for Millie's divided attention by her whole-souled absorption in everything she saw, and had to be forcibly conveyed past objects of unusual fascination, such as china and drapery shops, by the energetic Mrs. Bruckles, whose umbrella, about the size of a young tent, was capable of most persuasive and whole-hearted thumps and digs.

But when they reached the court-house, Millie's courage totally failed her; she could only sit, faint-hearted and silent, holding her father's hand and trying to control the quivering of her lips, while they waited during what seemed to her an eternity of miserable anticipation. He had by this time given his solicitor full particulars of the manner in which he had found the missing notes.

Then it was that Mr. Ray opened and read a letter the postman had put into his hands at starting.

"From your cousin, Bertram, in America, my dear," he explained to Millie, "his writing at all is a sign of grace; I earnestly trust that his heart may be softened."

Millie thought it more probable that his brain might be softened, and earnestly trusted that he might not be asking for money. In this she was not disappointed, since the letter, dated from Idaho, was as follows:—

DEAR UNCLE WILLIAM,

I've struck it at last, you bet. I guess I've played it pretty low down upon you in the past; but by-gones are by-gones. And I've got sand; I calculate I ain't such an all-fired skunk as all that amounts to. See here, Unky; this is about the size of it. I've made my pile; you've loaned the mater fifty pounds a year for ten years. Cipher that up and it amounts to £500; simple interest sums it up to five-fifty. Check for amount enclosed. Compound interest in the sweet by and by; you may stake your pile on that. Love to aunt and cousins.

Your affectionate nephew,

BERTRAM RAY.

P.S.—Sorry you are still a curate. Say, you ought to boss the whole show by this time.

"Oh! my dear, how faithless and foolish I

have been," exclaimed Mr. Ray, with moist eyes, "See, here is sufficient provision for you all during my detention," he added, handing Millie the cheque, which, being written in dollars, gave her an impression of fabulous wealth. "And what is best of all," he said in conclusion, "is the evidence of grace in your cousin's heart."

"Not," he observed subsequently, "that I rightly grasp the meaning of poor Bertram's somewhat confused metaphors. I cannot conceive of any advantage to be derived from striking an island, nor why, even if my principles allowed it, that circumstance should render it desirable for me to bet. Sand is doubtless equivalent to money—muck, as the good old Pilgrim termed it. That Bertram has made his pile is probably the American way of telling us that he has erected some fine public building; his poor mother denied herself the necessities of life to place him in an architect's office—in vain, we sadly feared at the time, but now, we perceive, with the best results. But how apply stakes to a pile? Doubtless he means that I may support, as with beams, props, or stakes, my pile or building, that is, my house, upon the assurances of a reward in the hereafter, which he, with the American colloquial familiarity, insidiously creeping into our own tongue—and sadly to be deprecated—terms the sweet by and by. Dear Bertram! a fine nature was his, but a sad upbringing. Boss the whole show must be a compliment, empty, but doubtless well-intentioned, in the style of oriental hyperbole—to emboss probably, that is adorn, the entire exhibition, namely, all that appeals to the carnal craving for display."

Millie, after her interview with Mrs. Bruckles the night before the trial, having fitted together in her imagination, the whole history of the migration of the bank-notes from George's pocket to the Bible and that of the letter case thence to the drawer, and, having communicated these facts and their bearing to Mr. Ray's solicitor, together with the necessity for producing Mrs. Bruckles and Bella in the witness-box, was by no means surprised at the line of defence taken up by Horace Burroughes and the eminent Q.C., who were Mr. Ray's counsel. But to Mr. Ray himself it seemed little short of miraculous.

Bella minded the eventful Friday by many tokens—it was the day when she broke the last dish-cover and the new water-jug unexpectedly

bounced off its handle as she was bringing it to the table, when she fell downstairs in company with a can of water and set fire to some sheets that she was airing—the day when Mr. Burroughes called and gave her a shilling because she had no relations left to beat her, and finally, it was the day when her master prayed for things to make his son strong. Asked how she knew that, she replied, with incontrovertible logic, that she knew it by results, because next day the things arrived, to wit, pork wine, colza oil (the application of which, medicinally, was new to the court), oysters, and an overcoat. On the morning of that Saturday she was engaged, in conjunction with Mrs. Bruckles, in cleaning the sitting-room. She then picked up two pieces of thin white paper with black marks on them, she judged them to be articles of value, probably things that Master Walter did his drawling with, she therefore placed them in the Bible, as the natural receptacle for valuables. One had a great white ten on it, printed in queer letters on a black patch. She did not then know it was a bank-note. This ignorance led Bella to deny having seen the lost notes until the evening before the trial, when Miss Ascott showed her some bank-notes.

Mrs. Bruckles remembered the fateful Saturday by many tokens, to wit, breaking out of undoubted measles in her thirteenth, a conversation with Mrs. Williams across the way on the subjects of pickled onions and the laying out of the late Mr. Williams, and the crowing of her black hen—a certain presage of calamity, etc., etc.

She saw Bella pick up the notes, and advised her to put them in the Bible; she was, like Bella, personally unacquainted with bank-notes and judged these bits of paper to be "patrons" of needlework.

In the course of that Saturday's sweeping, she found the leather case, with papers falling out of it, on the floor near the chest of drawers, the bottom drawer of which was well known as a receptacle for odds and ends: she therefore opened this drawer and "chucked it in, never thinking," etc. She was acquainted with the little dog's trick of picking handkerchiefs from pockets, and had seen him pick that of the baker's boy and unsuccessfully attempt the postman's. Bella had seen him do it many a time—she saw him tampering with the rector's pocket when she was bringing in the tea on

that Friday night. Millie was acquainted with the dog's trick and had seen him on that fateful evening disputing with the kitten the possession of a thin bit of paper. George Burroughes remembered feeling the little dog pulling at his coat on that eventful evening, and observing him at play with the kitten.

But it was all a perplexed confusion of wordy strife to Mr. Ray, who stood in the dock motionless, slightly bowed in a listening attitude, but really absorbed in silent prayer, the one incurious and uninterested person in the court. And when, after what seemed a purposeless see-saw of question and answer, some irrelevant observations from counsel and judge, and a few sharp passes of conversational fence between them, all terminated by a summary of the whole by the bench, the foreman of the jury unhesitatingly replied to the official citation, "We find him Not Guilty," these fateful words fell on his ears like a thunder-clap, and he never knew how it was that he found himself outside in the street with the phrase "without a stain on your character" echoing through his brain.

The cathedral bells were flinging showers of mellow melody over the grey old city seated at the foot of the downs, when Mr. Ray, amazed at breathing free air, returned through the sunshine to the station, and stepped into his train with Millie by his side. It was like a dream, most like the mental picture he had so often contemplated of St. Peter waking from his prison sleep at the angel's touch and passing silently through silently opening gates and breaking bars, along the silent streets hushed by the eastern night, in the solemn companionship of his celestial guide, whose noiseless foot-fall and glorious presence were to him as a vision. But no winged and shining angel visibly led Mr. Ray through these bustling sun-lit streets, his sole guide through this western city full of palpitating bell melody was his young daughter, fragile and very tired.

"But my dear, why are you crying?" he asked, when George Burroughes, who had looked through the window to shake the curate's hand for the fifth or sixth time, disappeared, and the train started.

"I don't know, Papa," she replied, quietly continuing it, "perhaps because it's so long since I've had time to."

The stopping of the train and clatter of

arrival in Freshford station aroused Mr. Ray from a comfortable nap, and on looking out, he was surprised to see the platform crowded with Freshford people, many being of the working class.

"Dear me, Millie," he said, "what can be the matter? It looks like Bank Holiday. And the church bells ringing, my dear. Have you heard of any wedding at Freshford? Or a royal birthday. Why the people are all looking at the carriages. Some great personage must be travelling with us. Oh!"

Mr. Ray drew in his head and closed his eyes, startled by the surge-like roar of a hearty cheer from the assembled crowd. Millie began to cry again. The people, with renewed cheering, thickened and pressed up to the carriage-door.

"Is anything the matter? Is the Queen coming?" disjointedly enquired Mr. Ray, again looking out and interrogating a lean clergyman with a pale, haggard, clean-shaven face, who, with an exclamation of "Here he is! Three cheers more for Mr. Ray!" began warmly shaking his hand and congratulating him.

It was the Local Demon, apparently beside himself with joy, and accompanied by half the parish in a similar condition, to welcome and congratulate Mr. Ray on his acquittal.

Freshford church was very full on the following Sunday, as it was rumoured that Mr. Ray would preach.

For on the previous Sunday the Local Demon, having dined for six consecutive days on half a potato and a glass of cold water, naturally tumbled out of the pulpit at the beginning of the sermon, George Burroughes springing to the rescue, and with admirable presence of mind, whipping the prostrate demon's M.S. sermon into his own keeping for immediate use, before picking him up and having him conveyed to the vestry, whence the latter, when comforted with smelling salts and stayed with flagons, subsequently heard, with mixed feelings, selected and emendated portions of his own discourse delivered in George's fine chest voice. George afterwards justified this piratical proceeding on the ground that the sermon, due to the congregation, was paid for and was not copyright, but, as the Local Demon reproachfully observed, the sting lay not so much in the publication of the sermon as in its editing.

But this is by the way, the relevant fact being that, Easter Day not coming for a whole fortnight after, it was hopeless to expect any more duty till then from a person of such intemperate appetite for Lenten fare, so that it was incumbent on Mr. Ray to resume his duties and especially to preach on that Palm Sunday.

But there was no burst of eloquence such as that which had surprised Freshford on the Sunday after the finding of the notes, nor was there any allusion to recent events. The thin old man, with the grey head and pale blue eyes, so familiar to them, looking a little thinner, older, and greyer, read a written sermon, on a subject suited to the season, in his usual voice, just as if there had been no interval filled with anguish and unmerited disgrace. But the Marquis of Carabas, waking from the slumber of the just at the end of that discourse, decided to present Mr. Ray to a rich living in his patronage, which happened to be vacant.

Mr. Ray was enchanted, and walked all the seven miles to Carabas Castle to thank the great man personally and with tears in his eyes, and, after taking his leave at the close of an agreeable visit, turned back to mention the insignificant fact that he begged to be excused from accepting the benefice. It was his opinion that it would be better filled by a younger and more active man, and he did not feel justified in leaving the work he had begun in Freshford. Besides which, he added, recent events convinced him that he had not a sufficiently firm grip of reality or knowledge of every-day life to trust himself with the sole management of a large parish.

This visit occurred some weeks after that Palm Sunday, on the afternoon of which Millie returned from the Sunday School by the field-path and stopped to lean on a gate, beneath a broad oak, on which some of last year's russet leaves rustled lightly in the live spring breeze.

These last few weeks of strenuous life had done the work of months in developing her. Character was stamped clearly on features that had been vague and undecided: angles and immature hollows of face and form had given place to shapely curves and lines of graceful flow; intellect and womanly feeling lighted the soft brown eyes, and a delicate rose-bloom was frequent on the face. All the emotion and active thought crowded

into those weeks had awakened the dormant soul, and the soul had moulded its earthly vesture upon its own beautiful lines.

Hope was breathing through every opening leaf-bud, in the far-off whisper of the gentled sea, in the stirring of last year's leaves overhead, and something better than hope was in Millie's heart. What a wonderful world was that spread before her in the soft spring sunshine! How pleasant was the live, stimulating air, the purple bloom on the yet unleaved copses, the brown-ridged fields, teeming with the year's unsprung harvest: how lovely the sky, mysterious with dim promise, vague and poetic, with glamour as of faery in the opal-tinted cumulus clouds, high-sailing over deep abysses of lavender blue.

From the copses the persistent *coo-coo-oo*, *coo-coo* of pigeons murmured pleasantly. A little wren, running about the hedge-row, poured out its sweet, keen, treble song, and the vague smell of spring was in the air.

The sound of quick firm footsteps on the field-path deepened the rose-bloom on Millie's face, quickened her pulse and darkened the brown irises of her eyes; and she turned her head a little to see the tall well-set figure, strong frank face, and kind clear eyes of George. Then her pulse made even music, and the double sense of shelter and liberty given by his large wholesome presence and genial voice was blended with the deepest and happiest passion we know.

It was an hour later when George and Millie reached the latter's home and found the well-known group, including Walter, rosy and refreshed by his Bournemouth holiday, and Buffie, grinning with conscious villainy.

The dingy parlour was glorified by floods of

golden sunlight pouring through the open window and bringing in the pungent scent of a flowering currant, the crimson spikes of which peeped in; a bowl of sweet dark wallflowers and some tall glasses of daffodils on a snowy cloth made the tea-table bright, the Sunday kettle sang cheerily on the fire. Bella only fell down once, and as she upset all the milk, George gave her half-a-crown to comfort her. This fall involved milkless tea, which, Mr. Ray observed, was a pleasant change, entitling them all to more sugar, and making them enjoy their next cup of tea with milk all the more.

Mrs. Ray appeared to have shaken off the Martha cares—serene contentment shone in her sweet dark eyes—yet she bore traces of the furnace through which she had just passed, in a fatigued and aged look. She wore some Honiton lace and a diamond brooch, a relic of youthful days, only brought out in happiness and a sure sign of inward content. When Mr. Ray heard George's deep voice and hearty laugh he was glad that at last they had a strong man-child to comfort their age, and when he looked at Walter's slightly bronzed and rounded face and missed the old tormenting cough, he gave thanks in his heart because his prayer was granted.

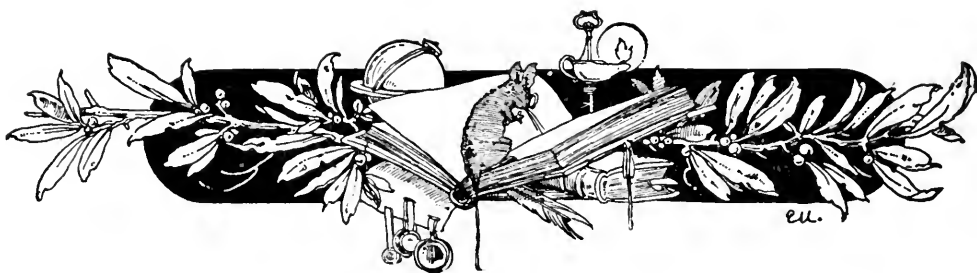
Buffie sat upright on his hind legs and begged; the kitten reposed with half-shut eyes, demure and dreamy on the sunny window-ledge; both were as serene and self-complacent as if they had never brought a whole family through weeks of complicated misery to the verge of ruin.

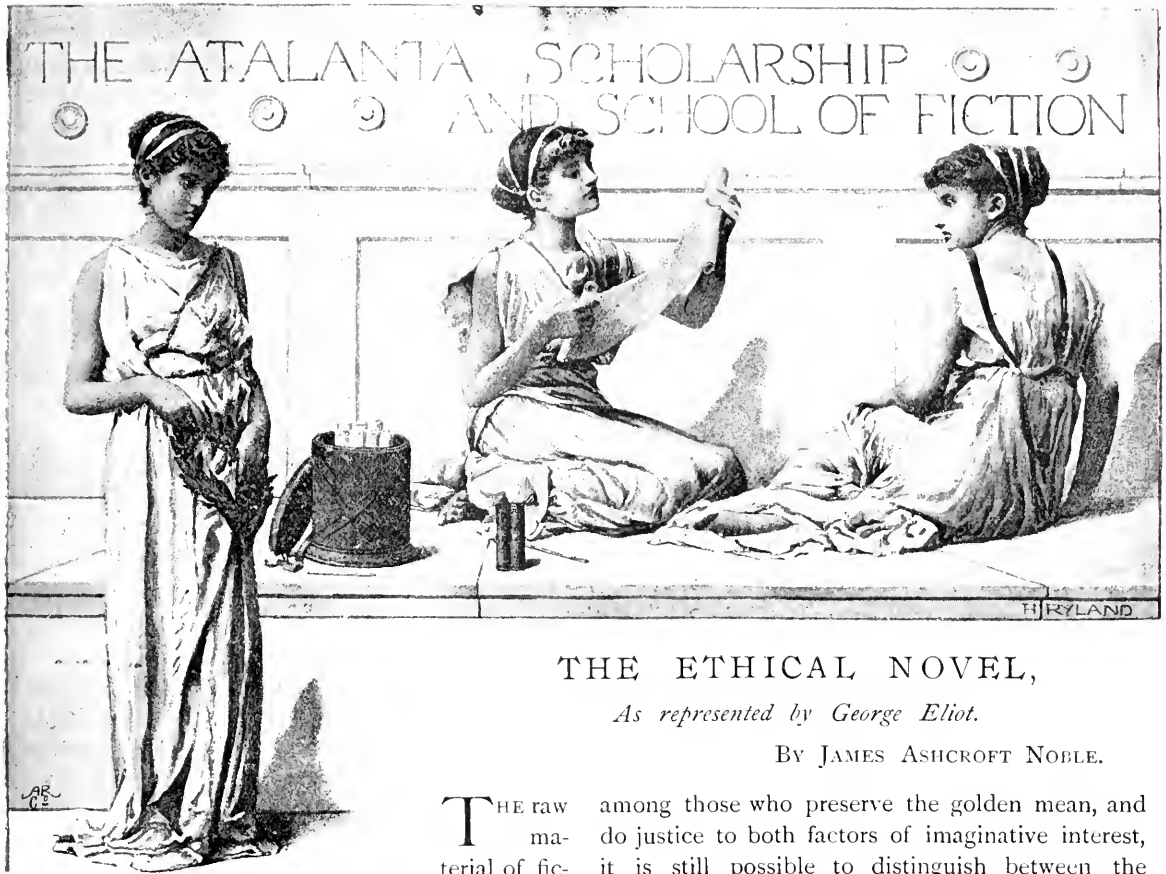
"Images of freakish Fate," George said, stroking the blissful Muffie.

"And what is Fate," rejoined Mr. Ray, patting Buffie's villainous head, "but the unconscious minister of a higher power?"

THE END.

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## THE ETHICAL NOVEL,

*As represented by George Eliot.*

BY JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

THE raw material of fiction consists

of characters and events; and, roughly speaking, novels may be divided into two classes, which are differentiated each from each by the varying powers and proportions of these two constituents. Of one class, the most typical examples are found in such books as the romances of the elder Dumas, or the more recent stories of Mr. Rider Haggard, where the interest is concentrated upon what happens, and the persons of the story appeal to us in proportion as they influence, or are influenced by, the course of the action. The other class finds its typical exemplars in the work of some contemporary analysts who seem to make a point of reducing incident to that minimum which is essential to the preservation of the narrative form, their theme being the action and interaction of personality upon personality—their story an evolution not of event, but of individuality and character. Neither of these recognisable extremes of treatment is, however, represented by the work of more than a few novelists. Writers of the first rank, as a rule, stand between them; but even

among those who preserve the golden mean, and do justice to both factors of imaginative interest, it is still possible to distinguish between the writers in whose work character is for the most part dominated and moulded by the course of events, and those other writers in whom the current of circumstances runs in a bed hollowed out for it with absolute inevitableness by the force of individual character. Among the latter the great novelist who chose to be known as George Eliot is the most conspicuous figure; and whatever be the added qualities of her work, or whatever the defects which may, for some, impair its charm, it will always repay the study of the neophyte who is drawn to that architecture of fiction which lays its foundations in inborn character and tendency, and raises upon it a structure the form of which is fixed and determined by the lives of the underlying ground plan.

There has never been a great creative artist whose method of presentation can be represented by a formula, but the method of George Eliot is very nearly covered by the formula—"Character is fate." Another distinguished writer of our time has said—"Adventures are for the adventurous"—that is, each personality will find or make its

own appropriate environment; and every novel of George Eliot's tells the story of such finding or such making. Take, as an illustration of her pictorial treatment of life as seen from this point of view, the book which is best known, her most popular, and—in some respects—her most-nearly flawless novel, "Adam Bede." Conceive the characters of Arthur Donnithorne, Hetty Sorrel, Adam Bede, and Dinah Morris, as George Eliot conceives them; place them in the relations to each other in which she places them at the opening of the story, and endeavour to imagine them playing their parts in a drama that is in any material respect different from the sombre tragedy to the evolution to which the book is devoted. It would be difficult to conceive a more fruitless imaginative exercise. The position of these four persons is like the position of the pieces in a perfectly constructed chess problem—"White to play, and mate in three moves." The experienced player glances at the board, and sees that the result is inevitable. Give white the move, and in two moves more mate must be declared: it is impossible either to avert or to hasten the catastrophe, which inheres in the local relations of the contending pieces.

And yet, in spite of this inevitableness, there is none of that lack of interest which necessarily attends the waiting for a foregone conclusion. In the second-rate novel of the old-fashioned kind there *was* this lack of interest because the characters were divided into classes, in one of which the admirable elements of human nature, in the other its detestable elements, were obviously dominant; and in any given situation we knew exactly what to expect. But in Arthur Donnithorne—who, though not the hero, is certainly the protagonist of "Adam Bede"—the elements of good and evil are, as in most of us, so curiously mixed with neutral elements (which may, by the action of spiritual chemistry, ally themselves with either) that, though the result of the combination may be absolutely certain, the complex variations of the various constituents give it, for a time, the appearance and the interest of uncertainty. The nature of the narrative and dramatic problem to which George Eliot was so constantly attracted, is admirably set forth in the following fragment of a conversation between Arthur and Mr. Irwine, in which we italicise the most significant sentences. Arthur is speaking:—

"Yes, that's the worst of it. It's a desperately vexatious thing, that after all one's reflections and quiet determinations, we should be ruled by moods that one can't calculate on beforehand. I don't think a man ought to be blamed so much if he is betrayed into doing things in that way, in spite of his resolutions."

"Ah, but *the moods lie in his nature, my boy, just as much as his reflections did, and more. A man can never do anything at variance with his own nature. He carries within him the germ of his most exceptional action*; and if we wise people make eminent fools of ourselves on any particular occasion, we must endure the legitimate conclusion that we carry a few grains of folly to our ounce of wisdom."

"Well, but one may be betrayed into doing things by a combination of circumstances which one might never have done otherwise."

"Why, yes, a man can't very well steal a bank-note unless the bank-note lies within convenient reach; but he won't make us think him an honest man because he begins to howl at the bank-note for falling in his way."

Mr. Irwine's remarks are an admirable indication of the theme chosen, and suggestion of the method followed, by George Eliot and all the novelists in whose work character dominates circumstance. The interest of life lies partly in its surprises, and partly in our perception (which, of course, comes too late to be anything but a humiliation) that they ought not to have been surprises; that the exceptional action is the outgrowth of a germ which has been there all the time, the result of the few grains of folly which have been mixed with the ounce of wisdom. Prior to the telling of the stories, who would see in Arthur Donnithorne a destroyer of innocence: in Tito Melema a thief and a traitor; in Nicholas Bulstrode a swindler, and, in intent, if not in act, a murderer as well? These are just the developments which seem, to the casual observer, to be excluded from the region of possibility, and yet, in each of the three men, there is from the first—to be seen by all who have eyes to see it—the something which makes the catastrophe not only possible but, under the special conditions, certain.

It will at once be observed that this is the class of fiction in which supreme success must needs be at once most prizeable and least frequent, because it makes so much larger a demand upon creative

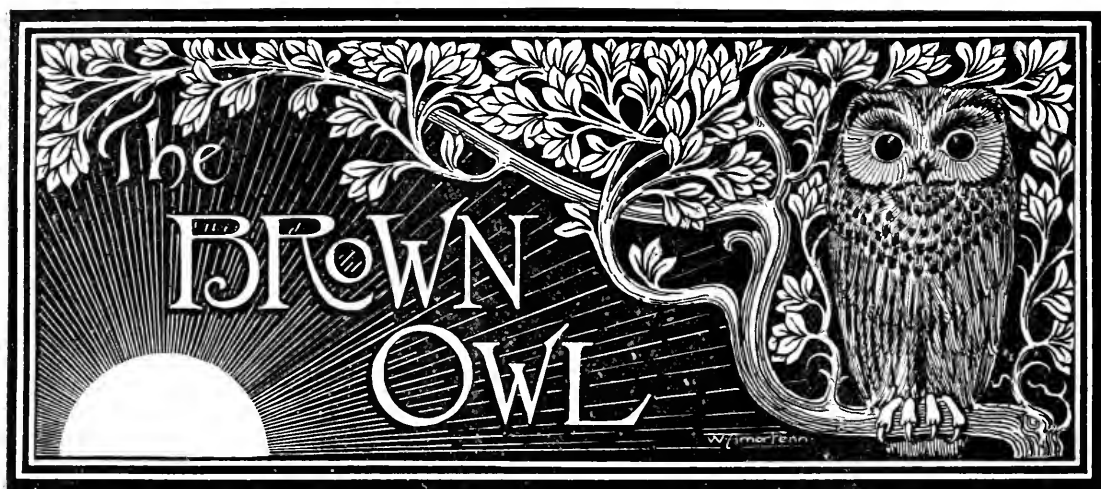


and sympathetic imagination than upon the dexterities of mere invention. All the moral, mental, and emotional constituents of human nature exist in every human being. If we say that a man is absolutely deficient in conscience, or amiability, or courage, or capacity for reasoning, or sense of beauty, we speak the language of rhetorical hyperbole, not of scientific accuracy. Every one of us has all these things, but the individuality which isolates every man and woman from every other man and woman lies in the infinitely varying proportions in which they are mixed. Each new-comer, either into the world of actual life or into that other world of creative imagination, is not merely a new-comer, but a new and unique organism, and only the power which created it can determine how it will conduct itself in a given set of surroundings. Those, therefore, who are ambitious to write the fiction of character should be careful to remember that, while second-rate novelists are content to ask the question, "Would this or that action be natural to any person in such or such circumstances?" the really great novelist does not question human nature in general, but the special manifestation of human nature in the one person with whom he has to deal, and asks, "Would it be natural to this particular man or woman?"

Still, though George Eliot always insists upon character as the dominant factor in the making of life, any literary disciple of hers who represented character as a kind of cast-iron rigidity, would show that he had missed the secret of her method. Circumstances in her novels have no creative or destructive power, but they often have a moulding and shaping efficacy. Especially is this seen in her rendering of the influence of one mind, one life, over another. George Eliot does not put the truths of life which she illustrates into portable formulæ, but in the conduct of her novels she says implicitly that a man's soul can only be saved or lost by himself. And yet, after reading the most powerful of the "Scenes from Clerical Life," we are justified in saying that the soul of Janet Dempster is saved by Edgar Tryan, by which we do not mean that Tryan imparted to Janet a strength for moral recovery which she did not previously possess, but that his influence was like the generous stimulant which enables the all but fainting wayfarer to summon together the scattered

fragments of latent energy, and to win the goal instead of falling by the roadside. George Eliot always represents effective influence of character upon character—not as the giving of something, but as the calling out of something; and where there is nothing to call out, the most helpful visitation fails of helpfulness. Thus, when Dorothea Casaubon attempts to do for Rosamund Lydgate what Edgar Tryan did for Janet Dempster, she fails miserably—not because she was a less capable ministrant to a mind diseased, but because Rosamund was deficient in that which alone could respond to the appeal. Her emotions were touched for the moment, but upon her moral nature Dorothea made no impression, because no avenue was open through which it could be reached. She left her as she found her, the slave of a selfishness so absolutely complete that it never even for a moment recognised itself for what it was.

It will, therefore, be seen that George Eliot's method of narrative is based upon a theory of life: and the following of the former can only be successful in the hands of a writer who accepts and affirms the latter. The theory is that the nature and course of a human being's life history is determined for him by what he is, not by his surroundings: and when sometimes the surroundings—the mere externals of event—seem to exercise a dominating influence (as, for example, in the case of Silas Marner, whose whole life was changed by the discovery of the little golden head upon his hearthstone, or, as in the case of Romola, whose meeting with Savonarola was a parting of the ways), the event is influential as a factor, only because it gives to some latent force of character an opportunity for asserting itself. Had Silas Marner's loss of faith and hope and love been as complete as it seemed to be, Effie would have come to him in vain: had Romola's belief in life's divine possibilities been slain, as she herself thought it, by the discovery of Tito's callous, heartless treachery, the messenger on the highway would have spoken to deaf ears. There are many novelists in whose work character counts for *much*: George Eliot is the one great novelist in whom it counts for *everything*, for in her books, those other factors of accident, event, and influence which, to superficial observation operate so tyrannously in the making of life, owe to character all their power to bless or to ban.



## THINGS IN GENERAL.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

THE habit of spending part of the year abroad has now become so fixed a habit of English life, that it has outlived all the criticism which used to be freely expended upon people who could not content themselves at home. We are none of us now required to content ourselves at home. To go as far as possible, to see as much (or in many cases, as little) as possible in the time we have at our disposal is much more near the prevailing doctrine now-a-days: and it must be said that it is a more reasonable one when it is stated in words—for however commonplace the travellers may be, it is strange if they do not derive some addition to their knowledge or understanding from the sight of other countries and the contact with other nations. There are a great many people who contract this gain to a very minimum by regarding everything fixedly and determinedly from an English point of view, by travelling in foreign countries without having the command of any language but their own, and by considering the natives of these countries as banded in a league to cheat and fleece them, the English masters of the world. It is a

humbling thought that there are a very great number of these unfortunate people, and that they cannot possibly better themselves, though they pass through the most enchanting regions and see, or rather look at, all that is most interesting in historical associations and most beautiful in art. But we need not consider these people, except to avoid their ways if possible. It is to be hoped there are many more who are qualified to make something of what they hear and see.

In the days which I remember, when there was but one Murray in the world, entitled a "Hand-book for Travellers on the Continent," and chiefly concerning the Rhine and other such places, now as familiar as Piccadilly, the habit of English tourists, and of the English family then only learning to go "abroad," was to take their holiday in autumn, at the hottest period of the year, when England is most delightful, and our own fields and woods, not to say moors and mountains, are at the height of their varied attractions. Many people, for necessary reasons—the long vacation the school holidays, the universal habit of devoting

this period to rest—retain this habit still, and crowd the Swiss hotels to overflowing, and make every mountain road a crowded thoroughfare. But there are many now, not restrained by these limitations, who adopt the better plan of leaving home in winter, when home is least pleasant, and fogs and storms are the order of the day, and darkness reigns in London. There can be little doubt of the superior advantages of this plan when it is practicable. We surround Christmas with a great deal of gaiety, partly fictitious, to defy circumstances, and make ourselves jolly, like Mark Tapley, when it is least natural to be so. But January, February and March are not cheerful months generally, and it is one of the wisest of instincts to spend them on the Riviera, where nature smiles even at the most dead season of the year. There is a little station on the P.L.M. Railway (Paris, Lyon et Méditerranée) which I always look out for in the morning on the way to Marseilles. One has left London dark and foggy, one drives through the streets of Paris glistening with rain: but in the morning one opens one's eyes upon a hedge of roses with delicate pink flowers, or those long, delicious buds, just opening, of the tea rose, which is as common as a weed in all the coasts of Provence. The sight gives one a little shock of pleasure and contrast, which it is delightful to experience.

I do not say it is always warm, even along this beautiful coast. When the Mistral blows, it blows very fiercely, and it is well to keep out of its power—and there is a moment when the sun has just set, which people who know what they are about avoid with care. But these are small drawbacks in comparison with the habitual sunshine which pours itself forth morning after morning, without stint, and the cheerful clearness of the air, and the joyous blue of the sea, and the flowers that abound everywhere. From the last day of February to the 12th of March there has not been one wet day in this bay of Mentone, though there have been cloudy days occasionally, and some that were softly gray, at which, naturally, we grumble when they come, more than even at the worst of London fogs. This indeed is a curious habit which develops among those who much frequent the Riviera. They transfer to it all the bad names which they would apply to their northern home, were they there. They cover themselves with furs,

and represent themselves as frozen to the bone, when the road by which they take their daily drive leads, as it must, after traversing the sunny side, round the deep shade of the other side of the valley. They would like valleys in which both sides are sunny, and roads that never turn a corner on the most deeply indented coasts of Europe. But we have nothing to do with these discontented people: they will no doubt find that their crowns do not fit, and that the celestial braes upon which they sit are damp in heaven itself.

I would suggest accordingly—forget fashion and its dictates; do not leave England when England is delightful, but steal away when it is a little cold, a little dismal, and the warmest of patriots must allow that the fog is depressing and the east winds cut to the bone. The most lingering cold spring in England and in Scotland has, as everywhere else, its gleams of betterment, its beautiful sunny mornings, its glimpses of rapturous hope. But the spaces are long between, and the pressure of the tardy delaying season very trying. Then is the time to transfer yourself to regions where all or almost all the mornings are bright, where the failure of sunshine is an exception, and where you rarely need to take thought for the morrow, whether it will rain or whether it will blow.

There are many curious considerations now, however, which mix themselves up with the subject of residence abroad, and which change its conditions altogether from the ancient mode. In this, as in so many other ways, the old method was certainly the best, just as it is for outside and material matters, almost always best, to have plenty of money, instead of only a very limited amount. For instance, the larger rent you can give for your house, the better value usually do you get for your money, the larger mansion being incomparably better, more convenient, more adapted to all the needs of life, and thus in reality cheaper than the small and pinched one, very much dearer at the money, which is all your means can afford. So, though we never perhaps under these circumstances would have made the *grand tour*, it was a great deal better to set out in your own large travelling carriage fitted with every convenience, or even in the roomy, but shabby, *vettura* of old days, and travel leisurely, stopping at carefully selected inns, at the most picturesque and interesting places on

the way, resting during the heat of the day in some genial village in the shade, making acquaintance at your leisure with the country and the people in their native aspect, in the circumstances of their daily life, and spending your own days in full enjoyment of the open air, the novelty of the country, and all those varying features of humanity which but make us feel the more, wherever we go, how completely we are brothers and members of the same race. Persons who made the *grand tour* saw also the courts and kings and fine society in the different capitals, which was no doubt a great advantage too, and a most entertaining variety; but we may pass over that, since it is a privilege not possible to all. But as for seeing the country, and the people of the country, that was the way to do it. You established little links of human relationship everywhere. You found out how the peasants thought, and what were the opinions of M. le Curé, and of those independent rustic innkeepers who were landed proprietors and persons of consequence, and who exist no longer. You made acquaintance without any trouble, almost without knowing it, with a hundred circumstances of life which you could not have found out from any book. You were better served, better fed (generally—if you were without prejudices, and did not demand beefsteaks everywhere), than you are now with all the big hotels. On the other hand, you required a good deal of money, more leisure, and a certain acquaintance with foreign tongues. I remark now-a-days under the last modern changes that the girls even, and still more the boys, in this present highly-advanced age, are much worse trained in this respect than their mothers, perhaps still worse than their grandmothers. The *vettura*—let us take it in its humble form—was perhaps a more expensive way of travelling; but I believe not nearly so much as we believe.

Now we flash across the country in a train Rapide (Oh! the anguish of these trains Rapide! You are packed like herrings in a barrel, not a spare inch is allowed you of space, though it is for a long night journey—unless you are able to afford yourself the mitigated misery of a sleeping carriage, at an exorbitant price). You arrive in an enormous hotel, where the whole personnel is German, speaking badly every language in the world, and especially English, which is the most necessary of

all. I have heard it said that Hotel-land is a separate sphere—an *imperium in imperio*—where you may forget that there are any distinctions of nationality, but only one vulgar and greasy Cosmopolitanism over all the extent of your travels. This is supposed to exempt the traveller from the necessity of learning any foreign language. He may thus leave his own country without any tremor in respect to being understood when he reaches the end of his journey—which is to say that he is cut off from every means of information outside the Hotel, except that of eyesight, which is, in many respects, a very deceptive medium. And in another way the unfortunate traveller also suffers much from these new methods. One used to live very well in France. One used to meet with dainty dishes even in those rustic inns which scarcely exist nowadays. And when there was a stop at a great railway station for a meal, it was ready waiting for you, only too much of it—good cooking, eatable food. Now you snatch a wretched repast, mingled with dust, while the carriage jolts and the dishes rattle, in a restaurant car, and when you arrive at your hotel, where once in the old days you were certain of a good dinner, the pretentious *Menu* records a meal half English, half German, without nicety or savour, roast beef either pale or bleeding: bad copies of the plain living of which we have too much, in a better form, at home. Even the admirable macaroni of Italy, in all its varieties, so different from the production of any other country, is served in the way which an English cook, knowing no better, makes it disagreeable in. These are the drawbacks of a mode which makes foreign countries accessible to so many more people, in so much more economical a way. From some of them the individual with a little ingenuity may partially liberate himself. I have heard it said, though I do not practically know, that by the sacrifice of a few hours you may balk the avaricious P. L. M. Railway Company of their wicked plan of making you uncomfortable or extravagant, by taking the second-class train from Paris to Marseilles, which is slower but much less crowded, and, of course, cheaper. But the great thing is that you should scorn the treacherous easement provided by all those English-speaking waiters, and do as your fathers did when they made what was, perhaps, the one journey of their life: learn the language of the country in which,

even though for a short time, you are going to live. This is a duty, anyhow, which ought to be much more attended to than it is. It is the greatest possible addition to your comfort, even on the well-trodden paths of the Riviera, which is not, indeed, a collection of English-speaking winter

resorts, but an old province of the most distinctive character and history of France, or an old piece of Italy, rich in tradition and story.

This is as far, however, as I can go now. The humours of the English residents on this beautiful coast may come another time.

## VIOLETS! SWEET VIOLETS!

“VIOLETS! Sweet Violets!” they are calling through the street,  
And there comes a rush of memories, with their perfume faint and sweet—  
Of memories that were buried deep beneath life’s frost and snow.  
They have wakened with the violets, those dreams of long ago!

“Violets! Sweet Violets!”—and oh! our hearts are fain  
To wander back to childhood’s days, and childhood’s haunts again,  
To glades where violets nestled, to sunny fields we ranged—  
So far away! so far away!—and all the world is changed.

“Violets! Sweet Violets!” adown the dusty street  
We hear the wild birds singing through the tramp of hurrying feet;  
We see the green leaves waving, the blue skies overhead,  
And nearer than the living are our unforgotten dead!

MARY GORGES.



## ATALANTA SCHOLARSHIP AND READING-UNION.

Write a travesty on the plot of "A Tale of Two Cities." The subject is meant to afford an opportunity to those members who have shown marked talent for satire.

Give an estimate of the character of Thomas Cromwell, Minister of Henry VIII.; precedence here will be given to elegance and originality of style and breadth of treatment. Reply papers to be sent in by 25th of the month, and not to exceed 500 words.

## SEARCH QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

### I.

- 1.—In what poem does this verse occur?  
 "Go forth, we have loosed thy chain!  
 We may deck thy cage with the richest flowers  
 Which the bright day rears in our eastern bowers:  
 But thou wilt not be lured again."
- 2.—What custom does it allude to?
- 3.—In what standard work is a similar ceremony described?

### II.

- 1.—To whom are addressed the following lines?  
 "Let no mean hope your souls enslave:  
 Be independent, generous, brave!  
 Your father such example gave,  
 And such revere!"
- 2.—Give name of author.

### III.

- 1.—What character uses these words?  
 "Oh, plead  
 With famine and wind-walking pestilence,  
 Blind lightning and the deaf sea; not with man!"
- 2.—Give names of author and work.

### IV.

- 1.—From what work are these lines taken?  
 "The hand that slew till it could slay no more  
 Was glued to the sword hilt with Indian gore.  
 Their prince, as justly seated on his throne,  
 As vain imperial Philip on his throne."
- 2.—What persons are alluded to?
- 3.—Point out error in the verse.

### V.

- 1.—What dignitaries were those mentioned in this couplet  
 "Still break the benches, Henley, with thy strain  
 While *Sherlock, Hare, and Gibson* preach in vain."
- 2.—Give author and work.

### VI.

- 1.—What English ballad is said by an authority to have inspired Shakespeare with the scene between Shylock and Antonio?
- 2.—What Italian novel is the poem adapted from?

### VII.

- 1.—Who sings thus?  
 "On the ground  
 Sleep sound;  
 I'll apply,  
 To your eye,  
 Gentle lover, remedy."
- 2.—Give source.

### VIII.

- Whence are taken the following quotations?
- "Get thee hence, nor come again,  
 Mix not memory with doubt,  
 Pass, thou death-like type of pain,  
 Pass and cease to move about!"
- "Then the great stars that glorified themselves in heaven,  
 The hollower, bellowing ocean, and again  
 The scarlet shafts of sunrise—"

## ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (MARCH).

### I.

Keats' *Isabella*.

### II.

Abraham Cowley, Thomas Otway, John Philips, Lord Lyttelton.

### III.

To Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, by S. T. Coleridge.

### IV.

- 1.—Natura Benigna.
- 2.—Theodore Watts.

### V.

- 1.—Robert Burns.
- 2.—James Montgomery.

### VI.

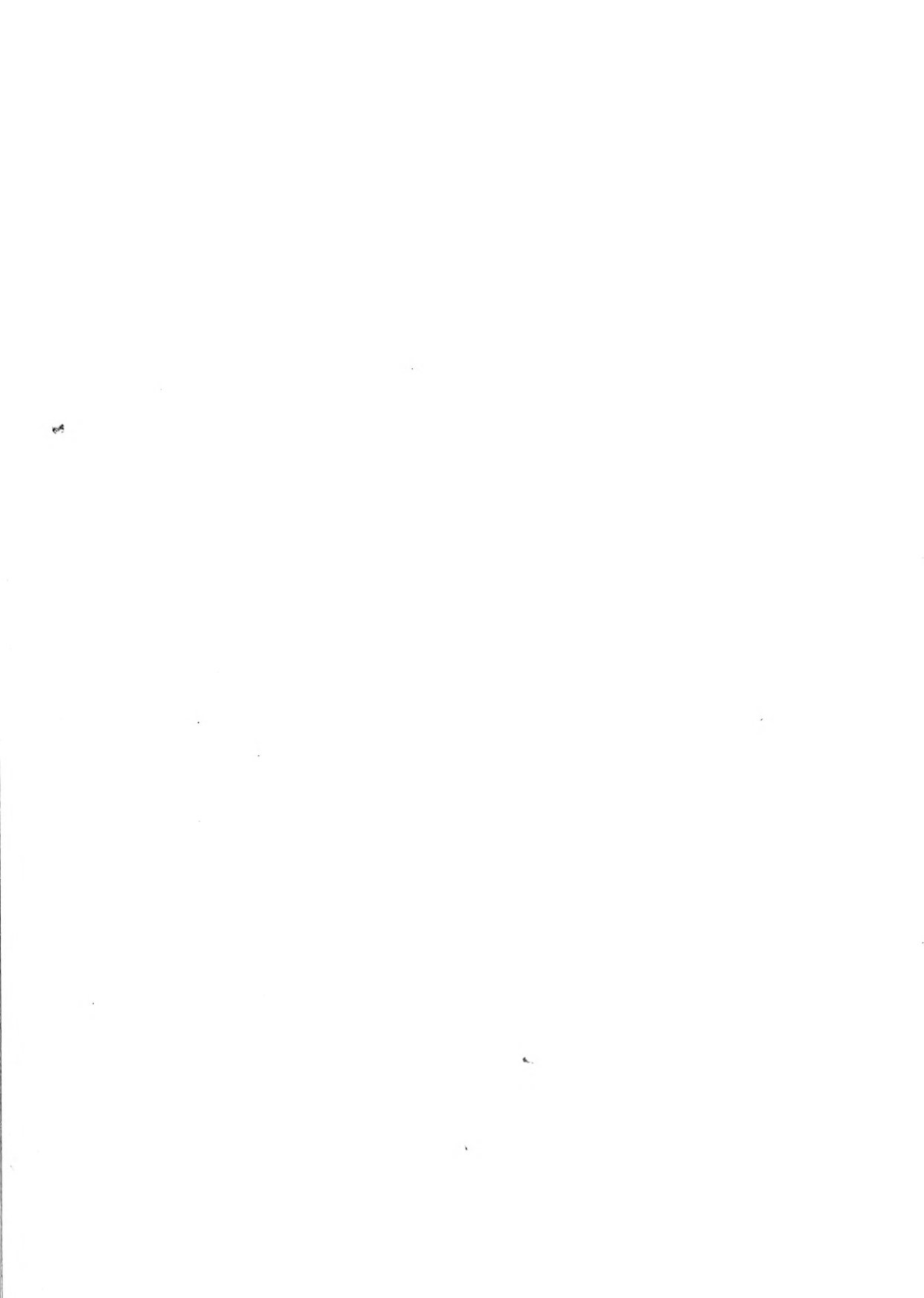
- 1.—The seven planets were symbolised by the seven strings of Apollo's harp; when Herschell discovered an eighth, he may be said to have added another string.
- 2.—Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope*.

### VII.

- Why am I a Liberal?*
- 2.—Robert Browning in a sonnet called *An Answer*.

### VIII.

Tennyson's *Princess*.





*Engraved by the Art Reproduction Co.*

ELAINE.

*T. M. Stoddwick.*

*(By permission of the Berlin Photographic Co.)*



SIR  
Robert's



Fortune.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

PART I.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

ALICK DUFF went away from the valley of the Rugas, calling on heaven and earth to witness that he would never be seen there more, and that from henceforward he was to be considered as an altogether shipwrecked and ruined man. "There is nobody that will contradict you there," the minister said, sternly, "and nothing but the grace of God, my man, for all you threep and swear to make my poor Eelen meeserable, that would ever have made any difference." "And who will say," cried Duff, "that it was not just *her* that would have been the grace o' God?" The minister shook his head, yet was a little startled by the argument. As for Helen, she said little more to her strange lover. "It is no use speaking now. There is nothing more to say. I cannot leave my father." Lily—to whom this story had come like a revelation in the midst of the quiet country life which seems, especially in Scotland, never to be ruffled by emotion, much less passion—and on whom it acted powerfully, restoring her mental balance and withdrawing at least a portion of her thoughts from herself—was a great deal at the Manse during this agitating period, which was all the more curious that nothing was ever said about it on the surface of the life which flowed on in an

absolutely unbroken routine, as if there was no impassioned, despairing man outside in the darkness waiting the moment to fling himself and his terrible needs and wishes at Helen's feet, and no terrible question tearing her heart asunder. That it was there underneath all the time was plain enough to those who were in the secret. The minister had an anxious look, even when he laughed and told his stories: and Helen, though her serenity was extraordinary, grew pale and red with an unconscious listening for every sound which Lily divined. He might burst in at any moment and make a scene in the quiet Manse parlour, destroying all the pretence of composure with which they had covered their life—or, worse still, he might do something desperate—he might disappear in the river, or end his existence with a shot, leaving an indelible shame on his memory, and upon those who belonged to him, and upon her who, as the country folk would say, "had driven him to it." If she had married Alick Duff and gone away with him, there would have been an unanimous cry over her folly: but if in his despair he had cut the thread in any such conclusive way, Helen never would have been mentioned afterwards but as the woman who drove poor Alick Duff to his death. There was a thrill of this possibility even in the air of the little town, where he was seen from time to

time wandering about the precincts of the Manse, and where everybody knew him and his story. But the most exciting thing of all to Lily was to see the face and watch the ways of the excellent young minister, Mr. Blythe's assistant and successor, who went and came through these troubled days, talking of the affairs of the parish, sedulously restraining himself that he might not appear to think of, or be conscious of anything else, but with a countenance which reflected Helen's, which followed every change of hers, yet when her attention was attracted towards him closed up in a moment, with the most extraordinary effort dismissing all meaning from his countenance. Lily became fascinated by Mr. Douglas, through whom she could read, as in a mirror, everything that was happening. He said not a word on this subject, which, indeed, nobody spoke of, nor did he betray any consciousness of the other man's presence, about which even the maid in the kitchen and the minister's man, who never had been so assiduous in the discharge of his duties as now, were so perfectly informed: but yet she felt sure that something in him tingled to the neighbourhood of his rival like an elastic chord. He would come in sometimes pale, with a stern look in his closely drawn mouth, and then Lily would feel sure that he had seen Alick Duff in the way, waiting till Helen should appear. And sometimes the lines of his countenance would relax, so that she felt sure he had heard good news and believed that haunting figure to have gone away: and then at a sound which was no sound outside, at the most trifling change in Helen's face, the veil, the cloud, would shut again over his face.

The manner in which Lily attained the possibility of making these studies was that by the minister's invitation, seconded, but not with very much warmth, by Helen, she had come to the Manse on a visit of a few days. Whatever prejudice Mr. Blythe had against her—and she was sure he had a prejudice, though she could not imagine any cause for it—had disappeared under the pressure of his own sore need. He himself was helpless either to watch over or to protect his daughter, and in despair he had thought of the other girl, herself caught in a tangle of the bitter web of life, and full of secret knowledge of its difficulties, who, though she was so much younger, had learned to some degree the lesson which Helen

was so slow to learn. "She's but a girl: but I'll warrant she could give Eelen a fine lesson what it is to lippen to a man," the minister said to himself. He had no high view of human nature for his part. To lippen to a man, seemed to him, though he had been in that respect severely virtuous himself, the last thing that a woman should do. For his own part he lippened to—that is, trusted—nobody very much, and thought he was wise in so doing. To have Lily there, seeing everything with those young eyes, no doubt throwing her weight on the other side, allowing it at least to be seen that a man was not so easily turned round a woman's little finger as poor Helen thought, would be something gained in the absence of all other help. Mr. Blythe had a tacit conviction that Lily's influence would be on the opposite side, though his chief reason for thinking so was one that was fictitious.

This was how Lily came to be acquainted with all that was going on. They all appealed to her behind backs, each hoping he or she was alone in calling for her sympathy. "You will tell her better than I can—they all distrust an old man. They think the blood's dry in his veins and he has forgotten he was once like the rest. And she will listen to him at the last. The thought that he's going away—to fall deeper and deeper, and that strong delusion she has got that she can save him, will overcome her—and I'll be left in the corner of the auld Manse, sitting alone."

"Oh no, Mr. Blythe, never think that: Helen will not leave you."

"I would not trust her, nor one of them," he cried—and there in the dark, sitting almost unseen beside the fire, his voice came forth toneless, like that of a dead man. "I have never been thought to make much work about my bairns: one has gone and another has gone, and it has been said that the minister never minded. But there was once an auld man that said, 'When I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.'"

Lily put her hand upon the large, soft, limp hand of the old minister in quick sympathy. "She will never leave you," she repeated, "you need fear nothing for that, she will never go away."

He shook his head and put his other hand for a moment over hers. "You may have been led astray," he said, "poor little thing! but your heart is in the right place."

Lily did not think or ask herself what he meant about being led astray. She was too much occupied with Helen, who came in at the moment with the thrill and quiver in her, which was the sign that she had seen her lover. The waning sunset light from the window which had seen so many strange sights, indicated this movement too, the tremor that affected her head and slight shoulders like a chill of colder air from without. She said softly as she passed Lily, "There is one at the door would fain speak a word to you." It was not a call which Lily was very ready to obey. She had kept as far as possible out of the reach of Duff, and she had not the same sympathy for him as for the others involved: indeed it must be allowed that, notwithstanding the charm of the romance, Lily's feelings were far more strongly enlisted on the side of the gentle and patient young minister than on any other. She lingered, putting away some scraps of work which had been on the table, until she could no longer resist Helen's piteous looks. "Oh, go, go!" she whispered close to Lily's ear. It was a blustering March night, the wind and the dust blowing in along the passage when the Manse door was opened, and Lily obeyed, very reluctantly, the gesture of the dark figure outside, which moved before her to a corner sheltered by the lilac bushes, which evidently was a spot very familiar. She felt that she could almost trace the steps of Helen on the faint line which was not distinct enough to be a path—and that opening among the branches, was it not the spot where she had leant for support through many a trying interview? Duff tacitly ceded that place to Lily, and then turned upon her with his eyes blazing through the faint twilight "You are with them all day, you hear all they're saying. They're all in a conspiracy to keep me hanging on, and no satisfaction. Tell me, am I to be cast off again like an old clout, or is there any hope that she'll come at the last?"

"There is no hope that she'll come, how could she?" cried Lily, "her father is old and infirm, Mr. Duff, she has told you. It is cruel to keep her like this, always in agitation. She cannot—how could she? Her father—"

"Confound her father!" he cried, swinging his fist through the air. "What's her father to her own life and mine? You think one person should swamp themselves for another, Lily Ramsay.

You've not been so happy in doing that yourself, if all tales be true."

"What tales?" cried Lily, breathless with sudden excitement: and then she paused and said proudly, "Take notice, Mr. Duff, that I am not Lily Ramsay to you."

"What are you, then?" he cried, with a laugh of scorn. "If you've kept your father's name you are just Lily Ramsay to Alick Duff, and nothing else. Our forefathers have known each other for hundreds of years. There was even a kind of a cousinship, a grandmother of mine that was a Ramsay, or yours that was a Duff, I cannot remember: but if you expect me that knew you before you were born to stand on ceremony—and Lumsden too," he added, in a lower tone, "whatever you may be to him."

"If it was my concerns you asked me out here to discuss, I think I will go in," said Lily, "for it is cold out of doors, and I have nothing to say to you."

"You know well whose concerns it was. Is she coming? Does she understand that it's for the last time? I know what she thinks. I've been such a fool hitherto, she thinks I will be as great a fool as ever, and come hankering after her to the stroke of doom. If she thinks that, let her think it no more. This time I will never come back. I will just let myself go—oh, it's easier, far easier than to hold yourself in, even a little bit, as I've done. I've always had the fear of her before my eyes. I've always said to myself—Not that! not that: or she will never speak to me again: but now——" He swung his fist once more with a menacing gesture through the dim air. It seemed to Lily as if he were shaking it in the face of heaven.

"And you don't think shame to say so!" cried Lily, tremulous with cold and agitation, and finding no argument but this, which she had used before.

"Why should I think shame? There are things a woman like Eelen Blythe can look over, but there are some you would not let her hear of, not to save your soul. It's a matter of saving a man's soul, Lily Ramsay, whatever ye may think. The worse is she knows every word I have to say: there's nothing new to tell her—except just this," he said, with vehement emphasis, "that this time I will never come back."

"And that is not new either. I have heard you tell her so fifty times. Oh man," cried Lily, "cannot you go and leave her at peace? She will never forget you, but she will accept what cannot be helped. Me, I fight against it, but I have to submit too. And Helen will not fight. She will just live quiet and say her prayers for you night and day."

"Her prayers! I want herself to stand by my side and keep my heart."

"You would be better with her prayers than with many a woman's company. Your heart! Can you not pluck up a spirit and stand for God and what is right without Helen? How will you do it with her, then? You would mind her at first—oh, I do not doubt every word she said—but then you would get impatient, and cry 'Hold your tongue, woman.'"

"Is that," he cried quickly, "what he says to you? He is just a sneaking coward, and that I would tell him to his face."

"You are a coward to call any man so that is not here to defend himself!" cried Lily, wild with rage and pain, "though who you mean, I know not, and what you mean, I care not. Never man spoke such words to me—but you would do it, you are of the kind to do it. You have thought and thought that she could save you, and then when you found it was not so, you would be fiercer at her and bitterer at her than you have been at your own self. Oh, let Helen be! She will never forget you, but she will never go with you, so long as her old father sits there and cannot move, in his big chair."

"If I thought that," he said: then paused. "If that's what's to come of it all after more than a dozen years! Would I have been a vagabond on the face of the earth if she had taken me then? I trow no. You will think I am not the kind good men are made of? Maybe no: but there's more kinds than one, even of decent men. I would not drag what was her name in the dust."

"You think not," said Lily, "but if you have dragged your father's—"

"You little devil," he cried, "to mind me of that!" and then he took off his hat stiffly, and with ceremony, and said, "I beg your pardon, Miss Ramsay—or whatever your name may be."

"You are very insulting to me," said Lily. "Why should I stand out here and let you abuse

me? What are you to me that I should bear it?" But presently she added, softening, "I'm very sorry for you, all the same."

She was hurrying away, when he seized her by the arm and held her back. "Do you see that? Am I to stand still and see that, and hold my peace for ever?"

The corner among the lilacs had this advantage, carefully calculated, who could doubt, years ago? that those who stood there, though unseen themselves, could see any one who approached the door of the Manse. The young minister, Mr. Douglas, had come quietly in while they were speaking: his footstep was not one that made the gravel fly. He stood, an image of quietness and good order, on the step, awaiting admittance. Scotch ministers of that date were not always so careful in their dress, so regardful of their appearance as this young Levite. He had his coat buttoned, his umbrella neatly folded. He was not impatient, as Duff would have been in his place: but stood immovable, waiting till Marget in the kitchen had snatched her clean apron from where it lay, and tied it on to make herself look respectable before she answered the bell. Duff gripped Lily's arm, not letting her go, and shaking with fierce internal laughter, which burst forth in an angry shout when the door was closed again and the assistant and successor admitted. "Call that a man!" he said, "with milk in his veins for blood: and you're all in a plot to take her from me, and give her to cauld parritch like that."

"He would keep her like the apple of his eye. There would no wind blow rough upon her if he could help it," cried Lily, shaking herself free.

"And you think that a grand thing for a woman?" he cried, scornfully, "like a petted bairn, instead of the guardian of a man's life."

"Oh, Alick Duff!" cried Lily, half exasperated, half overcome, "come back, come back an honest man: for her father will not live for ever."

"What would I want with her then—if I was all I wanted without her?" he said, with another harsh laugh—and then turned on his heel, grinding the gravel under his foot, and without another word stalked away.

How strange it was to go in with fiery words ringing in her ears and the excitement of such a meeting in her veins, and find these people apparently so calm, sitting in the little dimly-lighted

parlour, where two candles on the table and a small lamp by Mr. Blythe's head, on the mantel-piece, was all that was thought necessary. Lily was too much moved herself to remark how they all looked up at her, with a certain expectation, Helen wistful and anxious, the old minister closing his open book over his hand, the young one rising to greet her, with almost an appealing glance. They seemed all, to Lily's eyes, so harmonious, the same caste, the same character, fated to spend their lives side by side. And what had that violent spirit, that uncontrollable and impassioned man, with his futile ideal, to do in such a place? Mr. Douglas belonged to it, and fell into all its traditions: but the other could never have had any fit place within the little circle of those two candles on the table. When the pause caused by her entrance—a pause of marked expectation, though none of the party anticipated that she would say a word—was over, the usual talk was resumed, the conversation about the parish folk who were ill, and those who were in trouble, and those to whom any special event had happened. John Logan and the death of his cows, poor things, who were the sustenance of the bairns; and the reluctance of poor Widow Blair to part with her son, who was a “natural,” and had just an extraordinary chance of being received into one of those new institutions where they are said to do such wonderful things for that kind of poor imbecile creature: this was what Helen and her friend were talking of. The minister himself had a more mundane mind. He held his *Scotsman* fiercely, and read now and then out loud a little paragraph; and then he looked fixedly at Lily behind the cover of the newspaper, till his steady gaze drew her eyes to him. Then he put a question to her with his lips and eyes, without uttering any sound, and finding that unsuccessful, called her to him. “See you here, Miss Lily, there's something here in very small print ye must read to me with your young eyes.”

“Can I do it, father?” said Helen.

“Just let me and Miss Lily be. She will do it fine, and not grudge the trouble. Is that man hovering about this house? Is he always there? I will have to send for the constable if he will not go away.”

“I hope he is gone for to-night, Mr. Blythe.”

“For to-night—to be back to-morrow like a shadow hanging round the place. You're a young

woman and a bonnie one, and that carries everything with a man like him. Get him away! I cannot endure it longer. Get him away.”

“Mr. Blythe—”

“I am saying to you get him away!” said the minister, in incisive, sharp notes. And then he added, “After all, the old eyes are not so much worse than the young ones. Many thanks to you all the same.”

### CHAPTER XXX.

THIS agitating episode in Lily's life was a relief to her from her own prevailing troubles. They all apologized to her for bringing her into the midst of their annoyances, but it was, in fact, nothing but an advantage. To contrast what she had herself to bear with the lot of Helen even, was good for Lily. If she had but known a little sooner how long and sweetly that patient creature had waited, how many years had passed over her head, while she did her duty quietly, and neither up-braided God nor man, Lily thought it would have shamed herself into quiet, too, and prevented perhaps that crowning outcome of impatience which had taken place in the Manse parlour on that January night. Did she regret that January night with all its mystery, its hurry, and tumult of feeling? Oh, no! she said to herself, it would be false to Ronald to entertain such a thought: but yet, how could she help feeling with a sort of yearning the comparative freedom of her position then, the absence of all complication? Lily had believed, as Ronald told her, that all complications would be swept away by this step. She would be freed, she thought, at once from her uncle's sway, and ready to follow her husband wherever their lot might lie. Everything would be clear before her when she was Ronald's wife. She had thought so with certain and unfeigned faith. She might perhaps have been in that condition still, always believing, feeling that nothing was wanted but the bond that made them one, if that bond had not been woven yet. Poor Lily! She would not permit herself to say that she regretted it. Oh, no! how could she regret it? Everything was against them for the moment, but yet she was Ronald's, and Ronald hers, for ever and ever. No man could put them asunder. At any time,

in any circumstances, if the yoke became too hard for her to bear, she could go unabashed to her husband for succour. How then could she regret it? But Helen had waited through years and years, while Lily had grown impatient before the end of one: or perhaps it was not Lily, but Ronald, that had grown impatient. No, she could not shelter herself with that. Lily had been as little able to brave the solitude, the separation, the banishment, as he. And here stood Helen, patient, not saying a word, always bearing a brave face to the world, enduring separation, with a hundred pangs added to it, terrors for the man she loved, self-reproach and all the exactions of life beside, which she had to meet with a cheerful countenance. How much better was this quiet gentle woman, pretending to nothing, than Lily, who beat her wings against the cage, and would not be satisfied? Even now, what would not Helen give if she could see her lover from time to time as Lily saw her husband, if she knew that he was satisfied, and, greatest of all, that he was unimpeachable, above all reproach? For that certainty Helen would be content to die, or to live alone for ever, or to endure anything that could be given her to bear. And Lily was not content, oh! not at all content! Her heart was torn by a sense of wrong that was not in Helen's mind. Was it that she was the most selfish, the most exacting, the least generous of all? Even Ronald was happy—a man who always wanted more than a woman—in having Lily, in the fact that she belonged to him: while she wanted a great deal more than that, so much more that there was really no safe ground between them, but as much disagreement as if they were a disunited couple, who quarrelled and made scenes between themselves—which was a suggestion at which Lily half laughed, half shuddered. If it went on long like this they might turn to be—who could tell?—a couple who quarrelled, between whom there was more opposition and anger than love. Lily laughed at the thought which was ridiculous: but there was certainly a shiver in it, too.

Duff had gone away before her short visit to the Manse came to an end. He disappeared after a last long interview with Helen under the bare lilac bushes, of which the little party in the parlour was very well aware, though no one said a word. The

minister shifted uneasily on his chair, and held his paper with much fierce rustling up in his hands, towards the lamp, as if it had been light he wanted. But what he wanted was to shield himself from the observation of the others, who sat breathless, exchanging, at long intervals, a troubled syllable or two. Mr. Douglas had, perhaps, strictly speaking, no right to be there, spying, as the old minister thought, upon the troubles of the family, and, as he himself was painfully conscious, intrusively present in the midst of an episode with which he had nothing to do. But he could not go away, which would make everything worse, for he would then probably find himself in face of Helen, tremblingly coming back, or of the desperate lover going away. A consciousness that it was the last, was in all their minds, though nobody could have told why. Lily sat trembling, with her head down over her work, sometimes saying a little prayer for Helen, broken off in the middle by some keen edge of an intrusive thought, sometimes listening breathless for the sound of her step or voice. At last, to the instant consciousness of all, which made the faintest sound audible, the Manse door was opened and closed so cautiously that nothing but the ghost of a movement could be divined in the quiet. No one of the three changed a hairbreadth in position, and yet the sensation in the room was as if every one had turned to the door. Was she coming in here fresh from that farewell? Would she stand at the door and look at them all and say, "I can resist no longer. I am going with him." This was what the old minister, with a deep distrust in human nature, which did not except Helen, feared and would always fear. Or would she come as if nothing had happened, with the dew of the night on her hair, and Alick Duff's desperate words in her ears, and sit down and take up her seam, which Lily—feeling that in such a case the stress of emotion would be more than she could bear—almost expected? Helen did none of these things. She was heard, or rather, felt, to go upstairs, and then there was an interval of utter silence, which only the rustling of the minister's paper, and a subdued sob, which she could not disguise altogether, from Lily, broke. And presently Helen came into the room, paler than her wont, but otherwise unchanged. "It is nine o'clock, Father," she said, "I will put out the

Books." The "Books" meant, and still mean, in many an old-fashioned Scotch house, the family worship, which is the concluding event of the day. She laid the large old family Bible on the little table by his side, and took from him the newspaper which he handed to her without saying a word. And Marget came in from the kitchen, and took her place near the door.

Thus Helen's tragedy worked itself out. There is always, or so most people find when their souls are troubled—something in the lesson for the day, or in "the chapter," as we say in Scotland, when it comes to be read in its natural course, which goes direct to the heart. Very, very seldom, indeed, are the instances in which this curious unintentional *sortes* fails. As it happened, that evening the chapter which Mr. Blythe read in his big and sometimes gruff voice, was that which contained the parable of the Prodigal Son. He began the story, as we so often do, with the indifferent tones of custom, reverential as his profession and the fashion of his day exacted, but not otherwise moved. But perhaps some glance at his daughter's head, bent over the Bible, in which she devoutly followed, after the prevailing Scotch fashion, the words that were read—perhaps the wonderful narrative itself touched even the old minister's heavy spirit. His voice took a different tone. It softened, it swelled, it rose and fell, as does that most potent of all instruments when it is tuned by the influence of profound human feeling. The man was a man of coarse fibre, not capable of the finer touches of emotion: but he had sons of his own out in the darkness of the world, and the very fear of losing the last comfort of his heart made him more susceptible to the passion of parental anguish, loss, and love. Lower and lower bowed Helen's head as her father read—all the little involuntary sounds of humanity, stirrings, and breathings, which occur when two or three are gathered together, were hushed—even Marget sat against the wall motionless, and when finally, like the very climax of the silence, another faint, uncontrollable sob came from Lily, the sensation in the room was as of something almost too much for flesh and blood. Mr. Blythe shut the book with a sound in his throat almost like a sob. He waved his hand towards the younger man at the table. "You will give the prayer," he said, in what sounded a pre-emptory tone, and leaned back in the chair

from which he was incapable of moving, covering his face with his hands.

It was hard upon the poor, young, inexperienced assistant and successor to be called upon to "give" that prayer. It was not that he was untouched by the general emotion—but to ask him to follow the departure of that prodigal whose feet they had all heard grind the gravel, the garden gate swinging behind the vehemence of his going: the prodigal who yet had been all but pointed out as the object of the father's special love and for whom Helen Blythe's life had been, and would yet be, one long embodied prayer—was almost more than Helen Blythe's lover, waiting, if perhaps the absence of the other might turn her heart to him, could endure. None of them, fortunately, were calm enough to be conscious how he acquitted himself of this duty, except, perhaps, Mr. Blythe himself, who was not disinclined to contemplate the son-in-law whom he would have preferred as "cauld parritch"—Duff's contemptuous description of him. "No heart in that," the old minister said to himself as he uncovered his face, and the others rose from their knees. The mediocrity of the prayer, with its tremulous petitions, to which the speaker's perplexed and troubled soul gave little fervour, restored Mr. Blythe to the composure of ordinary life.

Helen said little on that occasion or any other. "He will be far away before the end of the week," she said, next morning. "It's best so, Lily. Why should he bide here, tearing the heart out of my breast, and his own, too—if it was not for that wonderful Scripture last night! He's away, and I'm content. And all the rest is just in the Lord's hands." The minister, too, had his own comment to make: "She'll be building a great deal on that chapter," he said to Lily, "as if there was some kind of a spell in it. Do not you encourage her in that. It was a strange coincidence, I am not denying it: but it's just the kind of thing that happens when the spirits are high strung. I was not unmoved myself. But that lad's milk and water," he added, with a gruff laugh, "he let us easy down." The poor "lad"—time-honoured description of a not fully fledged minister—whose prayer was milk and water, and his person "cauld parritch" to the two rougher and stronger men, accompanied Lily part of the way on foot, as she rode home, Rory having come

to fetch her, while the black powny carried her baggage. He was very desirous to unbosom his soul to Lily, too.

"Miss Ramsay, do you think she will waste all her heart and her life upon that vagabond?" he said. "It's just an infatuation, and her friends should speak more strongly than they do. Do you know what he is? Just one of those wild gamblers, miners, drinkers, it may be worse for anything I know—but my wish is not to say a word too much—that we hear of in America, and such places, in the backwoods, as they call it, men without a spark of principle, without house or home. I believe that's what this man Duff has come to be. I wish him no harm: but to think of such a woman as Helen Blythe descending into that wretchedness! It should not be suffered, it should not be suffered! taking nobody else into consideration at all, but just her own self alone."

"I think so too, Mr. Douglas," said Lily, restraining the paces of Rory, "but then, what can any one say if Helen herself——"

"Helen herself!" he said, almost passionately, "what does she know? She is young: she is without experience. She is very young," he added, with a flush that made it apparent for the first time to Lily that he was younger than Helen, "because she is so inexperienced. She has never been out of this village. Men, however little they may have seen of themselves, get to know things: but a woman—a young lady—how can she understand? Oh, you should tell her—her friends should tell her!" he cried, with vehemence. "It is a wicked thing to let a creature like that go so far astray."

"I agree with you, Mr. Douglas," said Lily, again, "but if Helen in her own heart says 'Yes,' where is there a friend of hers that durst say 'No'? Her father: that is true. But he will never be asked to give his consent, for while he lives she will never leave him."

"You are sure of that?" the young minister asked.

"If it had not been so, would she have let him go now? She will never leave her father—but beyond that, I don't think Helen will ever change, Mr. Douglas. If he never comes back again, she will just sit and wait for him till she dies."

"Miss Ramsay, I have no right to trouble you. What foolish things I may have cherished in my

mind, it is not worth the while to say. I thought, when the old man is away, what need to leave the house she was fond of, the house where she was born, when there was me ready to step in and give her the full right. It's been in my thoughts ever since I was named to the parish after him. It's nothing very grand, but it's a decent down-sitting, what her mother had before her: and no need for any disagreeable change, or questions about repairs, or any unpleasant thing. Just her and me, instead of her and him. I would not shorten his days, not by an hour—the Lord forbid! but just I would be always ready at her hand."

"Oh, Mr. Douglas," cried Lily, "her father would like it—and me, I would like it."

"Would you do that?" cried the young minister, laying his hand for a moment on Lily's arm. The water stood in his eyes, his face was full of tender gratitude and hope. But either the young man had pulled Rory's bridle unawares, or Rory thought he had done so, or resented the too close approach. He tossed his shaggy head and swerved from the side of the path to the middle of the road, when, after an ineffectual effort to free himself of Lily, he bolted with her, rattling his little hoofs with triumph against the frosty way. It was perhaps as well that the interview should terminate thus. It gave a little turn to Lily's thoughts, which had been very serious. And Rory flew along till he had reached that spot full of associations to Lily, where the broken brig and the fairy glen reminded her of her own little romance that was over. Over! Oh no, that was far from over; that had but begun that wonderful day when Ronald and she picked up the little stream and the accident happened, without which perhaps her own story would have gone no further, and Helen's would never have been known to her. Rory stopped there, and helped himself to a mouthful or two of fresh grass, as if to call her attention pointedly to the spot, and then proceeded on his way leisurely, having given her the opportunity of picking up those recollections which, though so little distant, were already far off in the hurry of events which had taken place since then. Had it been possible to go back to that day, had there been no ascent of that treacherous ruin, no accident, none of all the chains of events that had brought them so much closer to each other and wound them in one web of fate, if everything had



remained as it was before the fated New Year—would Lily have been glad? That the thought should have gained entrance into her mind at all, gave a heavy aspect to the scene, and threw a cloud over everything. She did not regret it: oh no, no! how could she regret that which was her life? But something intolerable seemed to have come into the atmosphere—something stifling, as if she could not breathe. She forced the pony on, using her little switch in a manner with which Rory was quite unacquainted. Let it not be thought of, let it not be dwelt upon, above all let it not be questioned, the certainty of all that had happened, the inevitableness of the past!

### CHAPTER XXXI.

THE spring advanced with many a break and interval of evil weather. The east winds blew fiercely over the moor, and the sudden showers of April added again a little to the deceitful green that covered bits of the bog. But May was sweet that year; in these high-lying regions the whins, which never give up altogether, lighted a blaze of colour here and there among the green knowes and hollows where there was solid standing ground, and where one who did not mind an occasional dash from the long heads of the ling which began to thrill with sap, or an occasional sinking of a foot on a watery edge, might now venture again to trace the devious way upon the most delicious turf in the world here and there across the moor. The advancing season brought many a thrill of rising life to Lily. It seemed impossible to dwell upon the darker side of any prospect while the sunshine so lavished itself upon the gold of the whins and the green of the turf, and visibly moved the heather and the rowan trees to all the effort and the joyous strain of life. I do not pretend that the sun always shone, for the history of the North of Scotland would, I fear, contradict that; but the number of heavenly mornings there were—mornings which lighted a spark in every glistening mountain burn and wet flashing rock over which it poured, and opened up innumerable novelties of height and hollow, projecting points and deep withdrawing valleys, in a hillside which seemed nothing but a lump of rock and moss on duller occasions—were beyond what anyone would believe. They are soon over: the glory of the day is often eclipsed

by noon: but Lily, whose heart, being restless, woke her early, had the advantage of them all. And many a tiny flower began to peep by the edges of the moor—little red pimpernels, little yellow celandines, smaller things still that have no names. And the hills stood round serenely waiting for summer, as with a smile to each other under the hoods which so often came down upon their brows even while the sun was shining. What did it matter, a storm or two, the wholesome course of nature? Summer was coming with robes of purple to clothe them, and revelations of a thousand mysteries in the hearts of the silent hills.

Amid such auguries and meditative expectations it was not possible that Lily could remain unmoved. And thus her expectation, if not so sublime as that of nature, was at least as exact and as well defined. Alas, the difference was that nature was quite sure of her facts, while an unfortunate human creature never is so. The course of the sun does not fail, however he may delay that coming forth from his chamber, like a bridegroom, which is the law of the universe. But for the heart of man no one can answer. It was such a little thing to do, such an easy thing—no trouble, no trouble! Lily said to herself. To find the little house they wanted, oh, how easily she could do it if she could but go and see herself to this, which was really a woman's part of the business. Lily imagined herself again and again engaged in that delightful quest. She saw herself running lightly up and down the long stairs. Why take Ronald from his work when she could do it so easily, so gladly, so pleasantly, with so much enjoyment to herself? And though she had been banished for so long, there was still many a house in Edinburgh which would take her in with kindly welcome, and rejoice over her marriage, and help and applaud the young couple in their start. Oh, how easy it all was, were but the first step sure. She had thought, in her childishness, that the mere fact of marriage would be enough; that it would bring all freedom, all independence with it, that the moment she stood by Ronald's side as his wife the path of their life lay full in the sunshine and light of perfect day. Alas, that had not proved so.

He came again another time between March and May. It was wonderful the journeys he took, thinking nothing of a long night in the coach coming or going, to see his love, for the sake of

only a couple of days in her society. The women at Dalugas were very much impressed too by the money it must cost him to make these frequent visits. "Bless me," Katrin said, "he is just throwing away his siller with baith hands: and what are they to do for their furnishing and to set up their house? I am not wanting you to go, Beenie—far, far from that. It will be like the sun gone out of the sky when we're left to oursel's in the house, nothing but Dougal and me. But oh! only to think of the siller that lad is wastin' with a' his life before him. They would live more thrifty in their own house than him there and her here, and thae constant traiks from one place to another, even though her and you at present cost him naething—but what after a' is a woman's meat?"

"I wot weel it would be more thrift, and less expense, not to say better in every way: but if the man does not see it, Katrin, what can the wife do?"

"I ken very weel what I would do," said Katrin, with a toss of her head. These were the comments below stairs. But when May came and went, and it was not till early June that Lily received her husband, the fever of expectation and anxiety which consumed her was beyond expression. She met him at the head of the spiral stair as usual, but speechless, without a word to say to him. Her cheeks flamed with the heat of her hopes, her terrors, her wild uncertainty. She held out her hands in welcome with something interrogative, inquiring, in them. She did not wish to be taken to his heart, to be kept by any caress from seeing his face and reading what was in it. Was it possible that it was not Ronald at all she was thinking of, but something else—not her husband's visit, his presence, his love, and the delight of seeing him? And how common, how trivial, how paltry a thing it was which Lily was thinking of first, before even Ronald! Had he found the little house? Had he got it—that hope of her life—was it some business connected with that that had detained him? Had he got the key of it—something resembling the key of it, to lay at her feet, to place in her hand, the charter of her rights and her freedom? but he did not say a word. Was it natural he should when he had just arrived, barely arrived, and was thinking of nothing but his Lily? It was his love that was in his mind—not any secondary thing such as filled hers. He led her in with his arms around her, and joy on his lips.

His bonnie Lily! if she but knew how he had been longing for a sight of her, how he had been stopped when he was on the road, how every exasperating thing had happened to hold him back! Ah! she said to herself, it would be the landlord worrying for more money, or some other wicked thing. "But now," cried Ronald, "the first look of my Lily pays for all." That was how it was natural he should speak. She supported it all, though her bosom was like to burst. She would not forestall him in his story of how he had secured it, nor yet chill him by showing him that while the first thought in his mind was love, the first in hers was the little house. Oh, no, she would respond, as indeed her heart did: but she was choked in her utterance, and could speak few words. If he would only say a word of that—only once, "I have got it, I have got it"—then the floodgates would have been opened, and Lily's soul would have been free.

Ronald spoke no such word; he said nothing—nothing at all upon that subject, or anything that could lead to it. He was delighted to see her again—to hold her in his arms. Half the evening, until Beenie brought the dinner, he was occupied in telling her that every time he saw her she was more beautiful, more delightful in his eyes. And Lily gasped, but made no sign. She would wait, she would wait! She would not be impatient—after all that was just business, and this was love. She would have liked the business best, but perhaps that was because she was common, just common—not great in mind and heart like—other folk—a kind of a housewife, a poor creature thinking first of the poorest elements. He should follow his own way; he that was a better lover, a finer being than she: and in his own time he would tell her—what after all was no fundamental thing: only a detail.

The dinner passed, the evening passed, and Ronald said not a word, nor Lily either. She had begun to get bewildered in her mind. Whitsunday! Whitsunday! Was it not Whitsunday that was the term, when houses were to be hired in Edinburgh, and the maids went to their new places? And it was now past, and had nothing been done for her? Was nothing going to be done? Lily began to be afraid now that he would speak; that he would say some word that would take away all hope from her heart. Rather that he should be

silent than that ! There was a momentary flagging in the conversation when the dinner was ended, and in the new horror that had taken possession of her soul, Lily, to prevent this, rushed into a new subject. She told Ronald about Alick Duff and Helen Blythe, and how she had received them at Dalrugas, and had passed some days at the Manse seeing the end of it. Ronald, with the air of a benevolent lord and master, shook his head at the first, but sanctioned the latter proceeding with a nod of his head. "Keep always friends with the Manse people," he said, "they are a tower of strength whatever happens : but I would not have liked to see my Lily receiving a black sheep like Alick Duff here."

What had he to do with the house of Dalrugas, or those who were received there ? What right had he to be here himself that he should give an authoritative opinion ? Oh, do not believe that Lily thought this—but it flashed through her mind in spite of herself, as ill thoughts will do. She said quickly, "And the worst is I took his part. I would have taken his part with all my heart and soul."

Ronald did nothing but laugh at this protestation. And he laughed contemptuously at the thought that Helen could have saved the man who loved her. "That's how he thinks to come over the women. He would not dare say that to a man," he cried. "Helen Blythe, poor little thing !" He laughed again, and Lily felt that she could have struck him in the sudden blaze out of exasperation, which somewhat relieved her troubled mind.

"When you laugh like that, I think I could kill you, Ronald !"

"Lily !" he cried, sitting up in his chair with an astonished face, "why, what is the matter with you, my darling ?" he said.

"Nothing is the matter with me ! except to hear you laugh at what was sorrow and pain to them—and deadly earnest as any person might see."

"Havers !" cried Ronald, "he had his tongue in his cheek all the time, yon fellow. He thought no doubt her father must have money, and it would be worth his while"—

"If you believe that everybody thinks first of money," Lily said, her hand, which was on the table, quivering to every finger's end.

"Most of us do," he said quietly, "but what does it mean that my Lily should be so disturbed

about Alick Duff, the ne'er-do-well, and Helen Blythe ?"

"I can't tell you," cried Lily, struggling with that dreadful inevitable inclination to tears, which is so hard upon women. "I am—much alone in this place," she said, with a quiver of her mouth, "and you away."

"My bonnie Lily !" he cried once more, hastening to her, soothing her in his arms, as he had done so often before. That was all—that was all he could say or do to comfort her : and that does not always answer—not at least as it did the first or even the second or third time. To call her my bonnie Lily ! to lean her head upon his breast that she might cry it all out there and be comforted, was no reply to the demand in her heart. And the hysteria passion did not come to tears in this case. She choked them down by a violent effort. She subdued herself, and withdrew from his supporting arm—not angrily, but with something new in her seriousness which startled Ronald—he could not tell why. "We will go upstairs," she said, "or, if you would like it, out on the moor. It is bonnie on the moor these long, long days, when it is night, and the day never ends. And then you can tell me the rest of your Edinburgh news," she said, suddenly looking into his face.

Oh, he understood her now ! His face was not delicate like Lily's, to show every tinge of changing colour, but it reddened through the red and the brown with a colour that showed more darkly and quite as plainly as the blush on any girl's face. He understood what was the Edinburgh news she wanted. Was it that he had none to give ?

"Let us go out on the moor," he said. "Where is your plaid to wrap you round ? It may be as beautiful as you like, but it's always cold on a north country moor."

"Not in June," she cried, throwing the plaid upon his shoulder. It was nine o'clock of the long evening, but as light still as day, a day perfected, but subdued, without sun, without shadow, like, if anything human can be like, the country when there is neither sun nor moon, but the Lamb is the light thereof. The moor lay under the soft radiance in a perfect repose, no corner in it that was not visible, yet all mystery, spell-bound in that light that never was on sea and shore. At noon, with all the human accidents of sun and shade, they could scarcely have seen their own

faces, or the long distance of the broken land stretched out beyond, or the hills dreaming around in a subdued companionship—as clearly as now : yet all in a magical strangeness that overawed and hushed the heart. Even Lily's cares—that one care rather, which was so little yet so great, almost vulgar to speak of, yet meaning to her everything that was best on earth—were hushed. The stillness of the shining night, which was day ; the silence of the great moor, with all its wild fresh scents and murmurs of sound subdued ; the vast round of cloudless sky still with traces on it of the sunset, but even those forming but an undertone to the prevailing softness of the blue—were beyond all reach of human frettings and struggles. They were on the eve of discovering that the earth had been rent between them, closely though they stood together, but in a moment the edges of the chasm had disappeared, the green turf and the heather, with its buds forming on every bush, spread over every horrible division. Lily put her arm within her husband's with a long, tremulous sigh. What did any uneasy wish matter, any desire, even if desperate, compared with this peace of God that was upon the hills and the moor and the sky ?

I doubt, however, whether all of this made it easier for Ronald to clear himself at last of the burden of the unfulfilled trust. When she said next morning, with a catch in her breath, but as perfect an aspect of calm as she could put on, "You have told me nothing about our house," his colour and his breath also owned for a moment an embarrassment which it was difficult to face. She had said it while he stood at the window looking out, with his back towards her. She had not wished to confront him, to fix him with her eyes, to have the air of bringing him to an account.

Ronald turned round from the window after a momentary pause. He came up to her and took both her hands in his. "My bonnie Lily," he said.

"Oh," she cried, with sudden impatience, drawing her hands from him, "call me by my simple name ! I am your wife ; I am not your sweetheart. Do I want to be always petted like a bairn ?"

"Lily," he said, startled, and a little disapproving, "there is something wrong with you. I never thought you were one to be affected with nerves and such things."

"Did you ever think I was one to live all alone

upon the moor ? to belong to nobody, to see nobody, to be married in a secret, and get a visit from my man now and then in a secret too ? and none to acknowledge or stand me in the whole world ?"

"Lily ! Lily !" he cried, "how far is that from the fact ? Am I not here whenever I can find a moment to spare, and ready to come at any time for any need if you but hold up your little finger ? Why is it you are not acknowledged and set by my side as I would be proud to do ? Can you ever doubt I would be proud to do it ? But many a couple have kept their marriage quiet till circumstances were better. You and I are not the first—I could tell you of a score—that would not keep apart half their days and lose the good of their life, but just kept the fact to themselves till better times should come."

"You said nothing to me about better times coming," said Lily : "you spoke of the term, and that you could not get a house to live in till the term."

"And I said quite true," said Ronald. As soon as he got her to discuss the matter, he felt sure of his own triumph. "You knew that as well as I did. And now here is just the truth, Lily. I am not very well off, and it does not mend my practice that I've been so often here in the north. Don't tell me I need not come unless I like—that's a silly woman's saying—it is not like my Lily. I am not very well off—and you have nothing if there is a public breach with Sir Robert. And for a little while I have been beginning to think"—

He paused, hoping she would say something—but Lily said nothing. She had covered her face with her hands.

"I had been beginning to think," he continued, slowly, "that this is a bad time for beginning life in Edinburgh. You are not ignorant of Edinburgh life, Lily : you know that in the vacations, when the courts are up, nobody is there. If we had twenty houses we could not stay in them in August and September, when everybody is away. As this is a bad time for beginning in Edinburgh, I was thinking that to take the expense of a house upon me *now*, would be a foolish thing. Think of a garret in the old town from this to autumn, with all the smoke and the bad air instead of the bonnie moor ! And in six weeks or a little more, Lily, I would be able to get some shooting hereabouts,

which will be a grand excuse, and we could be together without a word said, with nobody to make any criticisms."

She cried out, stamping her foot, "Will you never understand! It is the grand excuse and the nobody to criticize, that is insufferable to me. Why should there be any excuse? Why should there be a word said? I am your wife, Ronald Lumsden."

"My dear, you are ill to please," he said. "But nobody can see reason better than you, if you will but open your eyes to it. See here, Lily, two months and more are coming when our house, if we had it, would be useless to us: and in the meantime you are very well off here."

She gave him a sudden glance, and would have said something, but arrested herself in time.

"You are very well here," he repeated, "far better than even going upon visits, or at some other little country place, where we might take lodgings, and be very uncomfortable. Your moor is a little estate to you, Lily, it's company and everything. And if I had a little shooting which I could manage—a man with a gun is not hard to place in Scotland, and up in the north country there is many an opportunity: and there is always Tom Robison's cottage to fall back on, where you are very well off as long as you neither need to eat there nor to sleep there. Your servants here are used to me. Whatever explanations Dougal has made to himself, he has made them long ago. I have no fears for him. Where would you be so well, my Lily, as in your home?"

"And where would you be so ill, Ronald," she cried, "as in—as in—" But Lily could not finish the sentence. How could it be that he did not say that to himself, that he left it to her to say—to her who was incapable after all, of saying to the man she loved such hard words? Her own home, her uncle's house, who had sent her here to separate her once for all from Ronald Lumsden—while Ronald arranged so easily to establish himself under his enemy's roof.

"Where would I be so ill as in Sir Robert's house?" he said, with a laugh. "On the contrary, Lily, I am very happy here. I have been happier here than in any other house in the world, and why should I set up scruples, my dear, when I have none? If Sir Robert had been a wise man he never would have tried to separate you and me:

and now that we have turned his evil to good, and made his prison a palace, why should we banish ourselves when all is done to do him a very doubtful pleasure? He will never hear a word of it in my belief, and if he does he will hear far more than that I have come to share your castle for another vacation. It was the first step that was the worst. Yon snow storm, perhaps at the New Year: but that was the power of circumstances, and no Scots householder would ever have turned a man out into the snow. When we did that we did the worst—a few weeks, more or less, after that, what can it matter? And, short time or long time, it is my belief, Lily, that he will never be a pin the wiser. Then why should we trouble ourselves?" Ronald said.

As for Lily, this time she answered not a word.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

It may be imagined that after this there was very little said of the house in Edinburgh, which now indeed it was impossible to do anything about till the term at Martinmas. But Lily, I think, never alluded to the Martinmas term. Her heart sank so, that it recovered itself again with great difficulty, and the very suggestion of the thing she had so longed for, and fixed all her wishes upon, now brought over her a sickness and faintness both of body and soul. When some one talked by chance of the maids going to their new places at the term, the colour forsook her face, and Helen Blythe was much alarmed on one such occasion, believing her friend was going to faint. Lily did not faint. What good would that do? she said to herself, with a sort of cynicism which began to appear in her. She dug metaphorically her heels into the soil, and stood fast, resisting all such sudden weaknesses. Perhaps Ronald was surprised, perhaps he was not quite so glad as he expected to be when she ceased speaking on that subject: but on the whole he concluded that it was something gained. If he could but get her to take things quietly, to wait until he was quite ready to set up such an establishment as he thought suitable, or, better still, till Sir Robert died and rewarded her supposed obedience by leaving her his fortune, which was her right—how fortunate that would be! But Lily was taking things too quietly he thought,

with a little tremor. It was not natural for her to give in so completely. He watched her with a little alarm during that short stay of his. Not a word of the cherished object which had always been coming up in their talk, came from Lily's lips again. She made no further allusion to their possible home or life together, her jests about cooking his dinner for him, about the Scotch collops and the howtowdie, were over. Indeed, for that time, all her jests were over, she was serious as the gravest woman, no longer his laughing girl, running over with high spirits and nonsense. This change made Ronald very uncomfortable, but he consoled himself with thinking that in a light heart like Lily's, no such thing could last, and that she would soon recover her better mood again.

He did not know, indeed, nor could it have entered into his heart to conceive—for even a clever man, as Ronald was, cannot follow further than it is in himself to understand, the movements of another mind—the effect that all this had produced upon Lily, the sudden horrible pulling up in the progress of her thoughts, the shutting down as of a black wall before her, the throwing back of herself upon herself. These words could not have had any meaning to Ronald. Why a blank wall? Why a dead stop? He had said nothing that was not profoundly reasonable. All that about the vacation was quite true. Edinburgh is empty as a desert when the courts are up and the schools closed. The emptiness of London after the season, which is such perfect fiction and such absolute truth, is nothing to the desolation of Edinburgh in the time of its holiday. To live, as he said, in a garret in the old town, or even in the top storey of one of the newer, more convenient houses in the modern quarter, while everybody was away, instead of here on the edge of the glorious heather, among the summer delights of the moor, was folly itself to think of. It was impossible but that Lily must perceive that, the moment she permitted herself to think. Dalrugas might be dreary for the winter, especially in the circumstances of their separation, he was ready to allow: but in August, with the birds strong on the wing, and the heather rustling under your stride, and no separation at all, but the punctual return of the husband to dinner and the evening fire, what was there, what could there be to complain of? Sir Robert's house an ill place for him! he

said to himself, with a laugh: luckily he was not so squeamish. Such delicate troubles did not affect his mind: he could see what she meant, of course, and he was not very sure that he liked Lily to remind him of it: but he was of a robust constitution. He was not likely to be overwhelmed by a fantastic idea like that.

And the autumnal holiday was as he anticipated, actually a happy moment in their lives. Before it came Lily had time to go through many fits of despair, and many storms of impatience and indignation. To have one great struggle in life and then to be for ever done, and fall into a steady unhappiness in one portion of existence as you have been persistently happy in another, is a thing which seems natural enough when the first break comes in one's career. But Lily soon learnt the great difference here between imagination and reality. There was not a day in which she did not go through that struggle again, and sank into despair and flamed with anger, and then felt herself quieted into the moderation of exhaustion, and then beguiled again by springing hopes and insinuating visions of happiness. Thus notwithstanding all the bitterness of Lily's feelings on various points, or rather perhaps in consequence of the evident certainty that nothing would make Ronald see as she did, or even perceive what it was that she wanted and did not want—the eagerness of her passion for the house which meant honour and truth to her, but to him only a rash risking of their chances, and foolish impatience on her part to have her way, as is the worst of women—and her bitter sense of the impossibility of his calm establishment here in her uncle's house, a thing which he regarded as the simplest matter in the world, with a chuckle over the discomfiture of the old uncle—all these things by dint of being too much to grapple with, fell from despair into the ordinary of life. And Lily agreed with herself to push them away, not to think when she could help it, to accept what she could, the modified happiness, the love and sweetness which are alas of themselves not enough to nourish a wholesome existence. She was happy, more or less, when he came in with his gun over his shoulder, and a bag at which Dougal looked with critical but unapproving eyes. Dougal himself took, or had permission, to shoot over Sir Robert's estate, which was not of great

extent. These were not yet the days when even a little bit of Highland shooting is worth a better rent than a farm—and the birds had grown wild about Dalrugas, with only Dougal's efforts at "keeping them down." What the country thought of Ronald's position it would be hard to say. He gave himself out as living at Tam Robison's, the shepherd's, and being favoured by Sir Robert Ramsay's grieve in the matter of the shooting which there was nobody to enjoy. No doubt it was well enough known that he was constantly at Dalrugas, but a country neighbourhood is sometimes as opaque to perceive anything doubtful as it is lynx eyed in other cases. And as few people visited at Dalrugas, there was no scandal so far as any one knew.

And with the winter there came something else to occupy Lily's thoughts and comfort her heart. It made her position ten times more difficult had she thought of that, but it requires something very terrible indeed to take away from a young wife that great secret joy and pre-occupation which arises with the first expectation of motherhood. Besides it must be remembered that there was in Lily's mind no terror of discovery. Perhaps it was this fact which kept her story from awakening the suspicious and the scandal mongers of the neighbourhood. There was no moment at which she would not have been profoundly relieved and happy to be found out. She desired nothing so much as that her secret should be betrayed. This changes very much the position of those who have unhappily something to conceal, or rather who are forced to conceal something. If you fear discovery it dodges you at every step, it is always in your way. But if you desire it, by natural perversity the danger is lessened, and nobody suspects what you would wish them to find out. So that even this element added something to Lily's happiness in her new prospects. That hope in the mind of most women needs nothing to enhance it—the great mystery, the silent joy of anticipation, the overwhelming thought of what is, by ways unknown, by long patience, by suffering, by rapture, about to be, fills every faculty of being. I am told that these sentiments are old-fashioned and that it is not so that the young women of this concluding century regard these matters. I do not believe it: nature is stronger than fashion though fashion is strong, and can

momentarily affect the very springs of life. But when it did come into Lily's mind as she sat in a silent absorption of happiness, not thinking much, working at her "seam" which had come to be the most delightful thing in heaven or earth—that the new event that was coming would demand new provisions and create new necessities which it seemed impossible could be provided for at Dalrugas—the thought gave an additional impetus to the secret joy that was in her. Such things, she said to herself, could not be hid. It would be impossible to continue the life of secrecy in which she had been kept against her will so long. Whatever happened this must lead to a disclosure, to a home of her own where in all honour her child should see the light of day.

For a long time Lily had no doubt on this point. She began to speak again about the term and the upper storey in the old town. "But I would like the other better now," she said, "it would be better air for—and more easy to get out to country walks and all that is needed for health and thriving." It had been an uncomfortable sensation to Ronald when she had renounced all the talk and anticipation of the house to be taken at the term. But now that he was accustomed to exemption from troublesome inquiries on that point, he felt angry to have it taken up again. He was disposed to think that she did it only to annoy him—at a time too when he was setting his brain to work to think and to plan how the difficulties could be got over, and how in the most satisfactory way, and with the least trouble to her, everything could be arranged for Lily's comfort. But he did not betray himself, he took great pains even to calm all inquietudes and not to irritate her, or excite her nerves (as he said) by opposition. He tried indeed to represent mildly that of all country walks and good air, nothing could be so good as the breeze over the moors and the quiet ways about, where everything delicate and feeble must drink in life. But Lily had confronted him with a blaze in her eyes, declaring that such a thing was not possible, not possible! in a tone which she had never taken before. He said nothing more at that time. He made believe even, when Whitsunday returned, that he had seen a house which he described in detail, but did not commit himself to say he had secured it. Into this trap Lily fell very easily. She had all the rooms, the

views from the windows, the arrangement of the apartment described to her over and over again, and for the great part of that second summer of her married life there was no drawback to the blessedness of her life. She spent it in a delightful dream, taking her little sober walks like a woman of advanced experience, no longer springing from hummock to hummock like a silly girl about the moor, taking in, in exquisite calm, all its sounds and scents and pictures to her very heart. In the height of the summer days, when the air was full of the hum of the bees, Lily would sit under the thin shade of a rowantree, thinking about nothing, the air and the murmur which was one with the air filling her every consciousness. Why should she have sought a deeper shadow?—she wanted no shadow, but basked in the warm shining of the sun, and breathed that dreamy hum of life, and watched, without knowing it, the drama among the clouds, shadows flitting like breath as swift and sudden, coming and going upon the hills. All was life all through, constant movement, constant sound, alternation and change, no need of thinking, foreseeing, fore-arranging, but the great universe swaying softly in the infinite realm of space, and God holding all, the bees, the flickering rowan leaves, the shadows and the mountains and Lily brooding over her secret, in the hollow of His hand.

As the summer advanced, however, troubles began to steal in. She was anxious, very anxious to be taken to the house, which he allowed her to believe was ready for her. It must be said that Ronald was very assiduous in his visits, very anxious to please her in every way, full of tenderness and care, though always avoiding or evading the direct question. It went to his heart to disappoint her as he had to do again and again. The house was not ready, there were things to be done which had been begun, which could not be interrupted without leaving it worse than at first. And then was it not of the greatest importance for her own health that she should remain as long as possible in the delicious air of the north, the air which was, if not her own native air, at least that of her family. Lily had been deeply disappointed, disturbed in her beautiful calm and a little excited, perhaps, in the nerves, which she had never been conscious of before, but which Ronald

assured her now, made her "ill to please"—by his unreasonable resistance to her desire to take refuge in the house which she believed to be awaiting her—when a curious incident occurred. Beenie appeared one morning with a very confused countenance, to ask whether her mistress would permit her to receive the visit of a cousin of hers, "a real knowledgeable woman," who was out of a place and in want of a shelter. "You had better ask Katrin than me, Beenie," cried Lily, "I've filled the house too much and too long already. It is not for me to take in strangers." "Eh, Mem," cried Katrin, her head appearing behind that of Beenie in the doorway, "it will be naething but a pleasure to me to have her." Katrin's countenance was anxious, but Beenie's was confused. She could not look her mistress in the face, but stood before her in miserable embarrassment, laying hems upon her apron. "Speak up, woman, canna ye," cried Katrin, "for your ain relation. Mem (Katrin never said Miss Lily now), I ken her as weel as Beenie does. She's a decent woman and no one that meddles nor gies her opinion. I'll be real glad to have her if you'll give your consent." "Oh, I give my consent," Lily cried, lightly. And in this easy way was introduced into Dalrugas a very serious, middle-aged woman, not in the least like Beenie, of superior education, it appeared, and a quietly authoritative manner, whose appearance impressed the whole household with a certain awe. It was a few days after the termination of one of Ronald's visits that this incident occurred, and Lily could not resist a certain instinctive alarm at the appearance of this new figure in the little circle round her. "You are sure she is your cousin, Beenie? She is not like you at all." "And you're no like Sir Robert, Miss Lily, that is nearer to ye than a cousin," said Beenie, promptly. She added, hurriedly, "It's her father's side she takes after: and she's had a grand education. I've heard say that she kent as much as the doctors themselves. Education makes an awfu' difference," said Beenie, with humility. I am not sure that Lily was more attached to this new inmate on account of her grand education. But that was, after all, a matter of very secondary importance: and so the days and the weeks went on.

There occurred at this time an interval longer than usual between Ronald's visits, and Lily lost



all her happy tranquillity. She became restless, unhappy, full of trouble. "What is to become of me, what is to become of me?" she would cry, wringing her hands. Was she to be left here at the crisis of her fate, in a solitude where there was no help, no one to stand by her? She felt in herself a reflection too of the visible anxiety of the two women, Beenie and Katrin, who never would let her out of their sight, who seemed to tremble for her night and day. The sight of their anxious faces angered her, and roused her occasionally to send them off with a sharp word, half jest, half wrath. But when she was freed from these tender, yet exasperating watchers, Lily would cover her face with her hands and cry bitterly, with a helplessness that was more terrible than any other pain. For what could she do? She could not set out, inexperienced, alone, without money, without knowing where to go. She had, indeed, Ronald's address: but he had not changed into the new house, if new house there was. Lily began to doubt everything in this dreadful crisis of her affairs. She had no money, and to travel cheaply in these days was impossible. And how could she get even to Kinloch-Rugas, she who had avoided being seen even by Helen Blythe? She wept like a child in the helplessness of her distress. She did not hear any knock at the door or permission asked to come in: but started to find some one bending over her, and to see that it was the strange woman Marg'ret, Beenie's supposed cousin. Lily made this discovery with resentment, and bid her hastily go away.

"Mem, Mrs. Lumsden," Marg'ret said.

Lily quickly uncovered her face. "You know!" she cried, with a mixture which she could not explain to herself, of increased suspicion yet almost pleasure: for nobody as yet had called her by that name.

"I would be a stupid person indeed if I didn't know. Oh madam, I've made bold to come in, for I know more things than that. Beenie would tell you I've had an education. I've come to beg you, on my bended knees, to give up all thoughts of moving—it's too late, my dear young leddy—and just make yourself as content as you can here."

"Here!" cried Lily, with a scream of distress. "No, no, no, I must be in my own house. Woman, whoever you are, do you know I'm Miss Ramsay here? It's not known who I am—and

what will they think if anything—anything—should happen?"

"Are you wanting to conceal it, Mrs. Lumsden?"

"No, no, no! Anything but that! If you will go to the cross of Kinloch-Rugas and say Lily Ramsay has been Ronald Lumsden's wife for more than a year—I will—I will kiss you," cried Lily, as if that was the greatest sacrifice she could make.

"Then why should you not bide still? If it's found out, it's found out, and you're pleased. And if it's not found out maybe the gentleman's pleased. Mrs. Lumsden, I'm a real, well-qualified nurse. I will tell you the truth: they were frightened, thae women. I said, when Beenie told me, I would come and just be here if there was any occasion. Mistress Lumsden, I will show you my certificates. I am just all I say, and maybe a little more. Will you trust yourself to me?"

And what could Lily do? She was in no condition to inquire into it—to satisfy herself if it was a plot of Ronald's making, or only, as this woman said, a scheme of the women. To think over such subjects was no exercise for her at that moment. She yielded, for she could do nothing else. And a very short time after there was an agitated night in the old tower. It was the night of the market, and Dougal had come in, in the muzzy condition which was usual to him on such occasions, and consequently slept like a log and was conscious of nothing that was going on. Ronald had arrived the day before. And when the morning came there was another little new creature added to the population of the world.

It was more like a dream than ever to Lily—a dream of rapture and completion, of every trouble calmed, and every pang over, and every promise fulfilled. She was surrounded by love and the most sedulous watching. She seemed to have no longer any wishes: only thanks in her heart. She even saw her husband go away without trouble. "Come back soon and fetch us. Come back and fetch us," she said, smiling at him through half-closed eyes.

It was not, however, much more than a week after, when Ronald, without warning or announcement, rushed into her room, pale with fatigue, and dusty from his journey. "I have come here post haste," he cried. "Lily, your Uncle Robert is in Edinburgh. He is coming on here for the shoot-

ing, and other men with him. If I'm a day in advance that is all. I have thought of the only thing that is to be done if you will but consent."

"The only thing to be done," said Lily, raising herself in her bed, with sparkling eyes, "is what I have always wished: to tell him all that's happened—and oh! what a light conscience I will have, and what a happy heart!"

"He would turn you out of his doors," cried Ronald, in dismay.

"Well!" cried Lily, who felt capable of everything, "I may not be a great walker yet, but I'll hurple on till a cart passes or something, and they'll take me in at the Manse."

"Oh, my darling, don't think of such a risk," he cried. "For God's sake keep quiet. Say nothing and do nothing till you hear from me again. I have thought of a plan. Will you promise to do nothing, to make no confession, till I'm at your side, or till you hear from me?"

"Are you not going to stay with me, to meet him?"

"I cannot, I cannot! I've come now at the greatest risk. Lily, you will promise?"

"I am going to dress the baby for the night," said the nurse, interposing. "Will ye give him a kiss, mem, before I take him away?"

Lily's lips settled softly on the infant's cheeks like a bee on a flower. "He's sweeter and sweeter every day. Ronald, you must not ask me too much. But I will try: so long as all is well and safe with him."

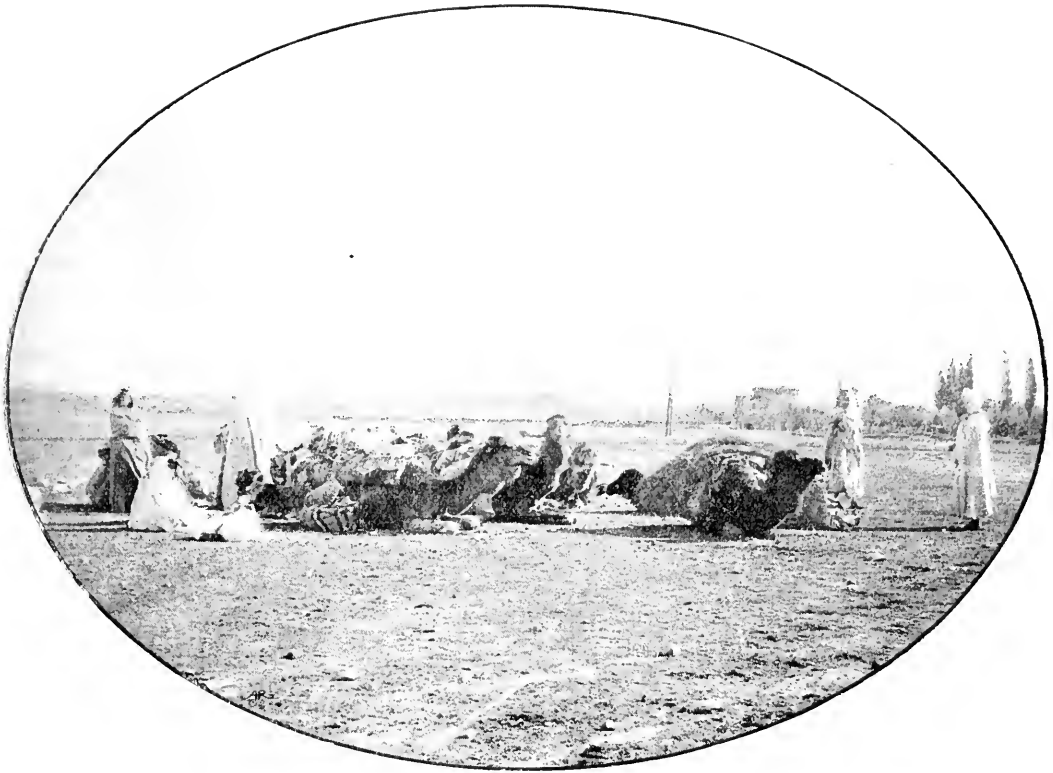
"I will see that all is safe with him," Ronald cried. He lingered a little with the young mother, half jealous of the looks she cast at the door for the return of the child, in Margaret's arms. "You have told her not to bring him back," she said with smiling reproach, "but I'll have him all to myself after." She was not afraid of his news: she was not shaken by his excitement. The approach of this tremendous crisis seemed only to exhilarate Lily. She was so glad, so glad to be found out. It was the only thing that was wanting to her perfect happiness.

Ronald's gig had been waiting all the time while he lingered. He had to rush away at last in order to catch the night coach from Kinloch-Rugas, he said: and Lily waited, with smiles shining through the tears in her eyes, to hear the sound of the wheels carrying him away. And then she cried impatiently, "Marg'ret, Marg'ret, bring me my baby."

But Marg'ret, it seemed, did not hear.

*(To be continued.)*





## AN OASIS IN THE DESERT.

BY MRS. PARR

IN these days of independent travel, when, no longer hampered with censure and prejudice, intelligent women can journey abroad without the absolute necessity of a male chaperon, it may interest some to read a few experiences met with by the writer during a visit to Biskra, which is the chief oasis in the great desert of Sahara.

It was early in April, which chanced that year, 1885, to be unusually wet and cold, and from Switzerland, Italy, the Riviera, came the same record of rain and snow. "Why not try Algeria?" said a friend. "Go to Biskra; you will find plenty of sunshine in the Sahara." The Sahara! the very word made us stand aghast. Memory brought back our old nurse's threat that we'd better be good or we should be sent to Timbuctoo. And was there not a certain Harry held up as warning in the nursery who, through saying "don't care," was eaten up by lions on the coast of Africa? It seemed running into the jaws of danger. Secretly, each felt some amount of trepidation, to be scattered to the winds, by the ticket clerk, at Charing Cross Station, who was prepared to book us to Biskra

with the same indifferent readiness he might have shown had we said Margate, or Folkestone. I think his sublime nonchalance settled us. Anyway, by the end of the week we had travelled to Marseilles. From there, without any difficulty, we made our way in one of the Transatlantic steamboats to Philippeville, landing, with no bad experience of the sea, and continuing our journey by rail first to Constantine, and on to Batna, then the terminus of the railway.

It is not my purpose to describe here what we saw and what we did on the way, but I may remark that body and spirits had been considerably damped by the steady downpour of rain which had accompanied us on land, during the whole distance from England, and when we turned our backs on the comfortless Batna hotel, and stepped into the ramshackle vehicle which was the diligence for Biskra, the leaden sky overhead, and the conversation regarding the snow that had fallen on the mountains near, did not make us feel very happy. There was a forced hilarity of face and manner, which

failed to take in anybody, and this defeat having exhausted our last effort, we sank back with a limpness which suggested despair.

At length away we started, through the cobbled street out on to a rough road, which gradually brought us to a country green with bushes, growing amid a carpet of daisies. And looking from the wee "modest crimson-tipped flowers" to the sky, a tiny rift appeared, which gradually opened into a ribbon of blue, stretching wider and wider until there were great azure patches everywhere, and the clouds, feeling they were beaten, rolled themselves into fleecy masses, and rapidly scudded away. Our spirits rose with the mists which, lifted far

swept down the stream, and the horses drowned. But the buoyancy which comes with revived hope prevents our feeling anxiety. With a sky more blue than Italy, and sunshine such as we have not seen since July, what matters delay? If they tell us that we shall have to sleep in the open air, it will seem no hardship, for we are assured that, beyond having no rain, in the desert there is no dew.

Continuing our journey, we pass herds of goats and sheep, the white-robed herdsmen reminding us of Jacob tending the flocks of his uncle Laban. At every turn, pictures from the Bible pass like a panorama before us. Two venerable men in



THE DILIGENCE TO BISKRA.

above the mountains, showed the hitherto hidden range of the Aures. Eastern life was beginning in reality; coming towards us were parties of travellers, not journeying in a common-place stage-wagon, as we were, but the men, wrapped in their ample bernouses, walking in front, or at the rear of their camels, on which were mounted the women and their household gods.

Our first stoppage is for breakfast—a meal which is to serve us until we reach El Kantara—the first oasis—beyond which it is believed we shall not get that night. The unusual rains have swollen the rivers; already one diligence has been

earnest discussion, might be Abraham entreating Lot that there should be no strife between them. "Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. Is not the whole land before thee?"

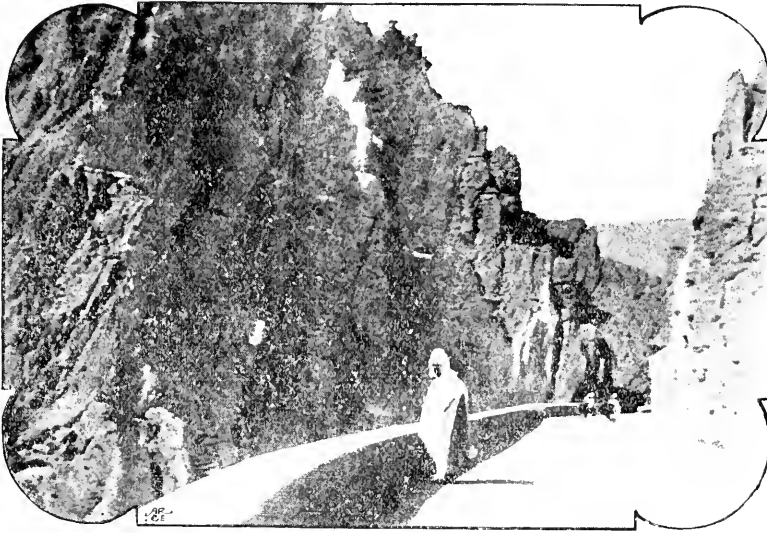
Passing a spring, in fancy we see Rebekah standing, offering her pitcher and saying, "Drink, my lord, and I will draw water for thy camels until they have done drinking." Rachel goes by, closely veiled, sitting on the images which she has hidden in the furniture of her camel. We have lost sight of our own nineteenth century, and are living with the patriarchs of old, looking on their land, realising their histories.

By this time the sun is high, beating down fiercely on the huge masses of limestone which now close us in, and narrow the road. The splendidly wooded range of the Aures Mountains keeps well in view, but, owing to the heavy rains, the route is unusually bad and, though we lighten their burden by walking, the horses toil along with difficulty. Each

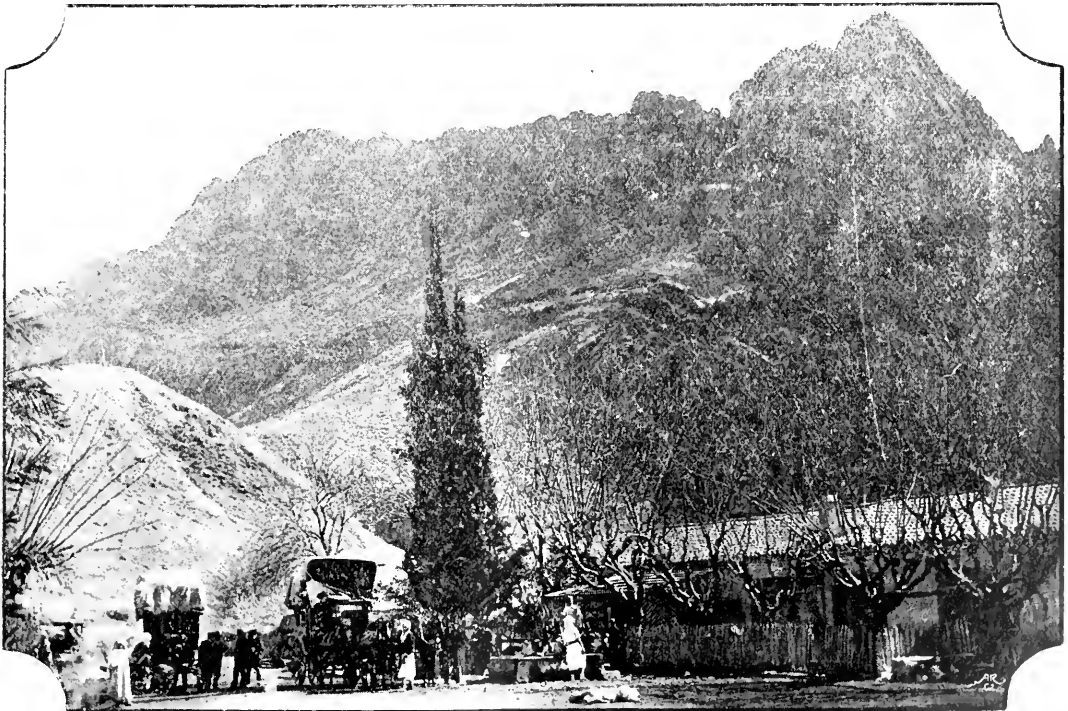
seems to end in a wall of rock, we come upon a little inn embowered in roses, we are only too happy to be told that we must make this our resting place for the night.

While dinner is being made ready for us, we have two good hours to spend in reconnoitring, and we set off to make the most of our time.

The road takes us along the tiny rushing stream, through a narrow wild gorge, to where a



APPROACH TO EL KANTARA.



THE INN AT EL KANTARA

shall not get beyond El Kantara, and when, after winding through a gully so narrow that it

wide open plain stretches out. We stand at the mouth of the desert; Africa is before us. The trans-

formation is magical: behind us tower aloft the soaring chains of the Aures and the Atlas Mountains—in front, as far as eye can see, spreads out the vast sandy plain, separated only from the great Sahara itself by the Col de Sfa, which, lying low, we catch sight of in the distance. Not ten minutes ago we have been picking flowers, standing under trees. The grain, which just after leaving Batna, the sower was scattering, near El Kantara the reaper was mowing, but in the vast solitude on which we are now looking there is not a sign of life or vegetation. The grandeur of its barrenness is overpowering; we stand gazing in silence, and then turn away.

very scanty garments, their skinny brown limbs laden with bracelets and bangles, and large rings hanging from their ears, mostly made of beads and shells. Under the palms and in the gardens outside the village the air was odorous with the scent of oranges and lemons in full bloom while fig trees were laden with figs, and apricots bent their well-laden boughs. Neither of these fruits, however, would be ripe until June.

We were treated so well at the Kantara Hotel, that we felt quite sorry we had not longer to stay, but by six next morning off we started, excited by the exhilarating lightness of the air, the brightness



HOTEL DU GRAND SAHARA.

We have secured the services of a guide, whose magnificent appearance calls forth our great admiration, and, under the wing of our white-robed *cicerone*, we make our visit to the village, and to the grove of palms—80,000 we are told in number. When we had become more familiar with the aspect of Arab villages, the houses did not cause us so much wonder, but at this first sight we could hardly credit that these flat-roofed mud hovels, without windows, chimneys, or colouring of any kind to break the monotony of form, were in truth the habitation of human beings. However, the convincing proof was given by the swarm of children, brought out by our approach, clad in

of the sun, and the anticipation of a speedy sight of the veritable Sahara—true home of the camel, the ostrich, and the date.

The river reached, we found its waters still rushing so rapidly that, to insure safety, we must each be carried across, and some half-dozen Arabs were ready to help us through the difficulty. They were strong, sinewy fellows, with not an ounce of superfluous flesh upon them, and on their backs, and seated on their joined hands, they took the whole party of passengers from one bank to the other. From this point the road improves, though vegetation becomes more scanty. Here and there we are met, or are overtaken by small companies

of Spahis, their red bernouses streaming out behind them as they shoot past with the swiftness of an arrow loosened from the bow.

Although still early in the day the sun beats fiercely down on the panting horses, who have begun to toil slowly up the winding path which leads to the Col de Sfa. Nearing the top, in spite of the heat, we who are walking hurry on, knowing that a few yards more will show to us that marvellous expanse of sand, so vast, so boundless, that, at its sight, the weary soldiers who had come to conquer shouted in ecstasy, "The sea! the sea!"

And as we look, the sea is the word that within us finds an echo. No better description could be given of those leaden billows, set in a tawny orange rim. Silent, sad, with no human habitation, no living presence visible: one is awe-stricken by the overpowering desolation of the scene.

Journeying on we gradually see, in the far distance, a slender line which we are told is Biskra. Welcome news, for we have had a hard day, and are feeling a very lively interest as to what we shall get for dinner. Slowly the line breaks, bushes are scattered here and there, swathed figures glide about, bundles of blankets seem dropped on the ground. Then come tall cypresses, palms, a road hedged with mimosa, its yellow tassels scenting the air, and, while our eyes are strained to see all we can through the dust-covered windows, the diligence stops, and we are the centre of a turbaned crowd.

"Hotel Sahara?" "A moi Madame!" and a white-robed figure takes possession of our belongings and marches us off to our desired haven.

The dinner was the best we had eaten since we left our Philippeville steamer, and we did thorough justice to it, although, towards the end, sleep was so heavy on us that we could hardly keep our heads from nodding.

Our bed-rooms were like anchorites' cells—very small, with tiled floors, and white-washed walls. They stretched out in a half square, on one side of the so-called garden—a sandy wilderness, where a palm, a fig, and a pomegranate gave shelter to stocks, nasturtiums, mignonette, and other home-like, sweet-scented flowers.

Our beds were clean, with no worse visitors than fleas, whose blood-thirsty intentions were quenched by a liberal sprinkling of "Keating." Occasionally a toad intruded and we were afforded a new sensa-

tion by stepping with a bare foot on his cold slimy back. Fortunately the room was only required for sleeping and dressing in, else instead of being amused, we might have been distracted by the noise and clatter that began as soon as day had fairly dawned. The servants—all men, half Arabs, half Negroes—chattered like parrots, and romped and anticked about like a set of monkeys. At one moment they were embracing, the next they were fighting. Suddenly they cried; as suddenly they laughed; and through the whole of this buffoonery one, or other, or all, kept up a constant la-la-la, which I think they called singing. This playful gambolling, combined with the sun's bright rays, roused us at an earlier hour than we quite bargained for, but regret vanished when we found ourselves seated under a trellis, sipping the excellent coffee which the waiter—Abdallah—brought out to us.

Unknowingly, perhaps, we were enjoying the satisfaction of leisure, without the disturbing consciousness that close by there were world-renowned sights to see, and that our duty was ~~was~~ to set off without delay and see them. Sights there were here, and full, too, of novelty, but they did not call for any settled plan. We could sit until we were tired and watch those around us—take a seat on one of the benches in front of the Hotel, and sheltered under the colonnade, look at what was going on there. An Arab with a baby fox, or jackal, which he begged we would buy, snuggled up in the folds of his bernous; a half-dozen young Arab boys, as saucy and daring as their brothers of London streets, with a bottle full of live scorpions which, after making a circle, they set loose, then worried and tempted with their feet and hands. If this did not draw the pennies from our pockets, they would beg them from us to give to the shoe-black that he might blacken their feet to look like "Msieu" shoes.

The real garden of the Hotel is the enclosure opposite to it. Here you come upon trees and shrubs such as in Europe one never sees. The varieties of the acacia species are infinite, their flame-coloured flowers gorgeous. The narrow trenches, half filled with stagnant muddy water, have their horrors hidden from view by a tangle of white and red oleanders—flowers which here thrive in perfection wherever they find moisture—and



then, all pervading, is the delicious scent of the hedge-rows of mimosa.

Wandering on from this fascinating tangle we began our survey of Biskra. That part in which the Hotel stands is the French Colony, mixed up with many Arab dwellers. The barracks, official offices, and the market being held here, marks it as the centre of business.

Adjoining is the Negro Village

whose services we could avail ourselves whenever we thought him necessary. Under his escort we paid our first visit to the Market and were introduced to the different craftsmen who, beneath the colonnade, carry on their trades of gun-smiths, jewellers, leather workers, &c., with so few tools and appliances, that we were surprised at the good work they turned out.

For a Pandemonium of noise, com-



THE SHADOW OF A GREAT ROCK."

where, in happy idleness or industry, these—during Turkish rule—poor slaves, now, since the occupation of the French, enjoy their liberty. From the Negro Colony we pass on to old Biskra, the Arab quarter, and an Arab Village—similar in every way to the one we saw at El Kantara.

Our landlord recommended to us a guide, of

mend me to that Biskra Market. Never before did such a babel of sound deafen our ears. The bleating of the goats, braying of donkeys, and unearthly yells of discontented camels, seem striving to drown the din and clatter of human voices. To enter into a competition with our tongues was useless, and we found ourselves



reduced to gesticulation, which each regarded in the other as a failure.

Beyond going to La Fontaine Chaude—some hot sulphur springs three or four miles distant—we made no excursions while at Biskra. Our great pleasure was to wander—early in the morning or late in the evening—for a mile or so out into the desert, collecting such plants as seemed to us curious: generally specimens of the *Anastatica Hierocunthica*, called by the natives, “The Rose of Jericho,” and the *Asteriscus Pygmæus*, “The Hand of Fatma;” or to walk to one of the many plantations of palms and gaze at the tall stems surmounted

the air, and the absence of that scorching heat which we had been taught to associate with the desert. Between twelve and two, hot it certainly was, but there were plenty of cool spots to retire to, and every day about three o’clock a little breeze would spring up and energy was again possible.

I know the people who came only to stop a few days, looked on us as terribly ignorant idlers. Some would remonstrate on the pity of coming so far, and not going to the Oasis of Sidi Okba, or to see the famed date palms of Chetma. No; the interest of our visit was centred in the daily life of

the people about us. Our pleasure was to fit them into the stories



IN THE SAHARA.

by their graceful crowns. Sometimes we would get a boy to carry

our tea-basket, and in a thicket of pomegranates, ablaze with scarlet blossoms, we would boil our kettle in gipsy fashion. A favourite spot was a garden belonging to a courteous French gentleman, M. Landou, who gives permission for free entrance to all visitors at Biskra. Here may be seen a rare collection of African trees and flowers, and, what to us was a great fascination, the most perfect view of the setting sun is to be had from here.

Since our arrival we had been struck with the exquisite brightness of the sun, the lightness of

with which we had been familiar from our childhood. As one half belonged to the Bible, so the other seemed but just to have stepped out from “The Arabian Nights’ Entertainments”: Ali Baba driving his three asses laden with wood, all unconscious of the treasures which “Open, Sesame!” would reveal to him. Hassan with his camels; the discontented barber, Aboo Seer, and Aboo Keer, the wicked dyer, going forth together to woo fortune and to see the world—these and a dozen others would constantly cross the scene and set our imaginations working.

In the evenings when dinner was over, it became almost a habit to stroll down to a Café near, and from the street outside watch the old-world picturesque in-

ran around the walls, some thirty to forty Arabs would be assembled, smoking, and sipping coffee, while they listened to a story related by one of the public story-

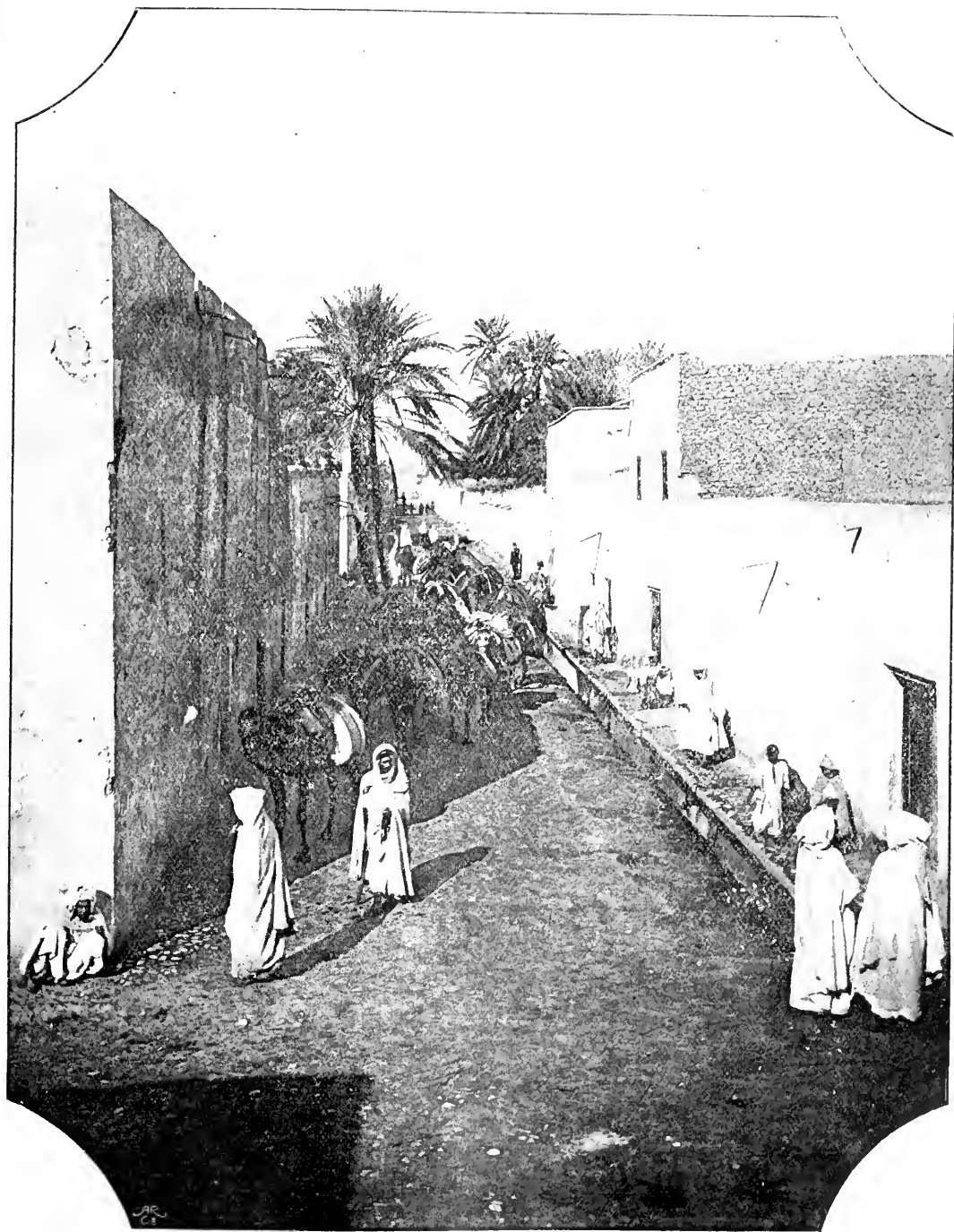


AN OULAD NAYL OR DANCING GIRL: BISKRA.

terior. In a fairly-sized room, reclining on matting, or squatted cross-legged on the raised divan which

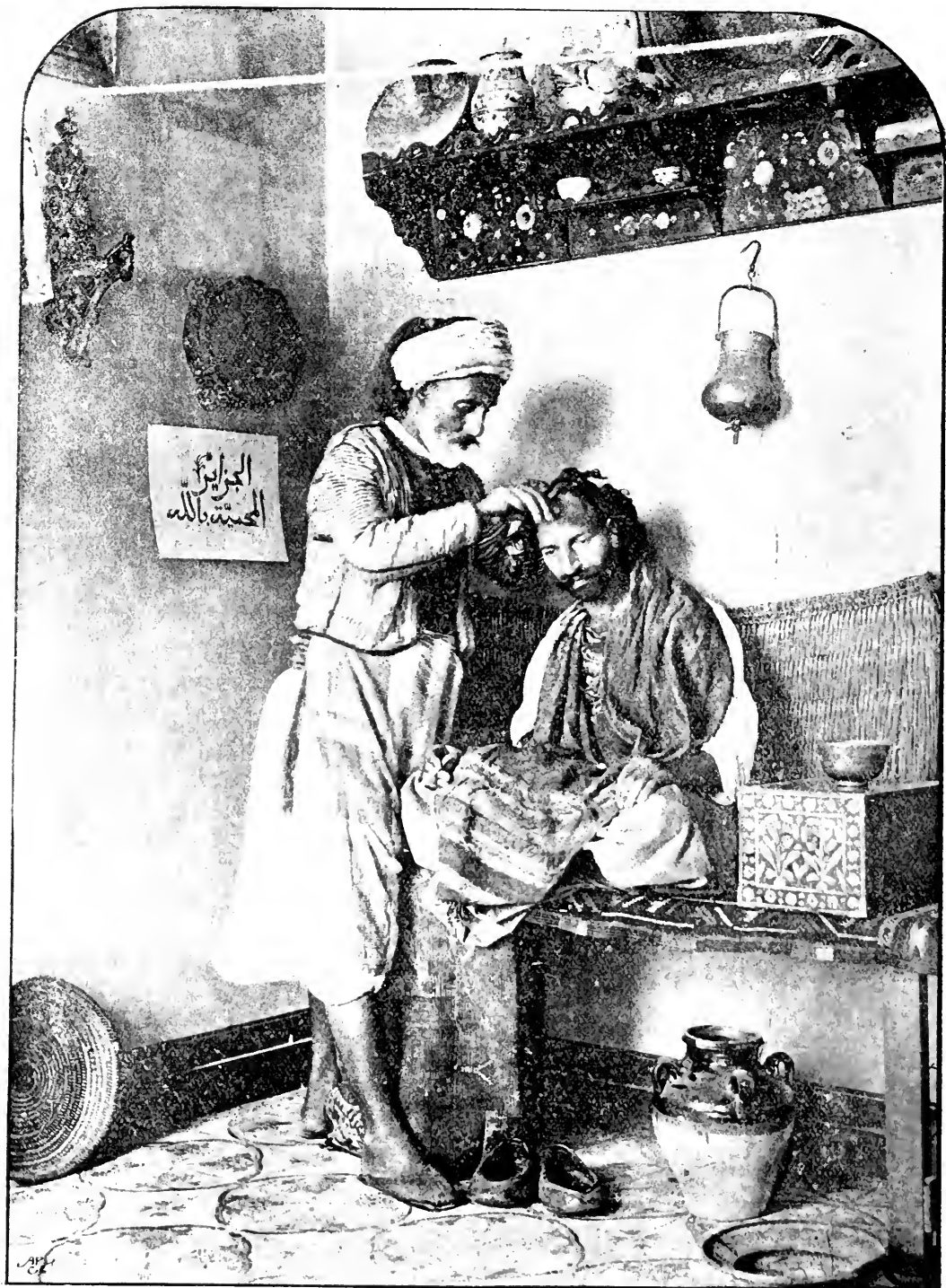
tellers. Naturally we did not understand a single word the man said, but, for all that, his

gestures, his varied intonation, the surprise, seen, going through their oscillations and gyrations  
ridicule, pathos he could throw into his voice, to the sounds of an ear-piercing pipe, and a dis-



STREET IN FEZ.

enthralled us, and we always went away fascinated. At the Café Maures the dancing-women may be  
cordant tom-tom. The dress of these Oulad  
Nayls, as they are called, is remarkable. The



BARBER'S SHOP

drapery, which stands in place of our gown, is usually red, so is the veil which shades the tresses of coarse hair stained the colour of port wine. Only the Arab women cover their faces, the Negresses allow their ebon visages to be looked at by every passer-by. In dress they affect the brightest colours and the most violent contrasts. The portion of good looks which the poor things have had, seem, to us, to depart with early childhood. A Negro baby is enchanting: it seems to walk at once, and is far more precocious than our children. We used to fill our pockets with sweets, and the gift of a few would make the dark eyes sparkle, and bring smiles to the mouths, so soon to forget that they have ever looked like rosebuds.

We felt quite mournful as the time for our departure from Biskra drew near. How had we spent our days? We could hardly tell—a certain proof that they had gone very happily.

In these restless times of struggle and hurry a little real idleness is good for the mind as well as

for the body. How many make pleasure a toil, and come back from a holiday feeling ill, and weary, with no definite idea of one of the many things they have tried to crowd into their minds.

In these desultory jottings of our visit to the Sahara there is, perhaps, little that is instructive or new, but it gave us a different experience of life: it supplied a key to those wonderful histories told in the Bible, and made us realise the graphic fidelity with which they are written. Added to this, the scenes were fresh and novel—we had journeyed to another quarter of the globe with very little trouble, and no more expense than is usually incurred by ordinary travel. I need hardly say that on our homeward journey we stopped at Constantine, Bona, Algiers, and many minor places full of interest. Perhaps at some future time we may relate some of the incidents which there startled and amused us, but they are not connected with the Sahara, and therefore do not belong to this paper.

## THE LADY POET.

By E. CONDER GRAY.

I MET her at the house of a friend more years ago now than I like to count. He said to me: "We are to have with us to-night one of Mrs. Patronille's white swans—a poetess, as she says, of the finest genius, and a musician and composer too—sure to make her mark in time, full of fancy and grace, and worthy of all attention. It will be an honour to have helped her to the success which she so well deserves, and which is sure to come to reward those who 'give her a lift.'"

On this he went off to look after some of the duties that fall to a host in such cases; but these words made me curious and expectant. At that time I had not seen many poets, and had seen no poetess, so far as I knew. I was all on the *qui-vive*, not yet having learned that these favoured sons and daughters of the Muse do not always bear the mark of their appointment on their

foreheads. Somehow my fancy conjured up a figure tall and slim, a sweet face, with fine lips, red and full, cheeks with just a touch of colour, no more, a nose straight and sensitive, with curved nostrils, like that of a Greek statue, a fine arched forehead, with the mark of thought, an eye at once soft and clear, pensive and penetrating, dreamy and quick, and hair flowing golden and bountiful.

Many of the party arrived before the daughter of the Muse with her friends and patrons. One of them was so suggestive of poetry that I was sure that in her we had our poetess. Light and sylph-like she stepped along as though she carried some graceful atmosphere with her, her fair hair gathered up and confined, in the fashion of the day, with a blue ribbon round it, and, as it were in active rebellion, crept forth free, in tiny clusters, at every available point, and only added to the



charm, imparting an air of wild freedom, as of a child of Nature. She was introduced to me, though I did not catch her name, and I entered into conversation with her, as she drew her fan now and then to her face, and smiled as she nodded replies to my remarks, or made some observation of her own. At last I ventured to say, "You write poetry?"

"Verses," she replied, "everybody does that now-a-days, and I have made a song or two; but you mustn't let it be known in Society that you do, else it will be thought you are blazé and a blue-stockings. That is what my aunt told me; so I only do it on the sly and show my lines to nobody. I keep a diary and put them there, and then I can refer to them when I please."

"Ah, you do not think of *fame*, then?" I said, with an accent of reverence and regard for this unusual modesty.

"No, I don't," she replied. "I don't think that sort of thing helps you in any way in Society, and I'm sure my aunt knows all about it. She has been in Society for more than thirty years, and knows everybody."

Just then quite a little stir and buzz arose, and, to my great surprise, Mrs. Patronille and Miss Dewyrise were announced. Mrs. Patronille: a stately figure, dark, with prominent eyes, and an air of command. Behind her came the most disappointing figure you ever saw—short, dumpy; a flattish face, no colour in it; high cheek bones; broad mouth and small sunken eyes; a long, rather aquiline nose, and brown hair, cut like a man's, and waving round her face and neck, making the face look yet more flat and colourless. She wore spectacles, which made her eyes seem smaller and yet more sunken.

"And *that* is the poetess?" I said to myself, but just loud enough to be heard by my companion.

"Oh, yes; Miss Dewyrise," she said, in a constrained tone. "Who would have expected to meet her here? but, of course, Mrs. Patronille can manage anything where the fine arts are concerned. Do you know her?" she asked.

"No," I replied, "but Mr. Sefton-Gore has promised to introduce me to her and Miss Dewyrise."

"Ah, well," she said, "you will soon be in

superior company. There is aunt rising, and I must go to her," and she swept away, leaving me to my own company and observations.

After a while Mr. Sefton-Gore suddenly pulled up, came to me and said, "Ah, let me introduce you to Mrs. Patronille—most remarkable woman—knows everybody worth knowing, I assure you; and Miss Dewyrise is well worth talking to. Come along," and he led me across the room and introduced me, marching away to do a similar service to some other body, as soon as the formalities were gone through.

"Remarkable man, Mr. Sefton-Gore," said Mrs. Patronille, as I confess I was so awed in presence of such a woman, and of a poetess besides, that I could not speak. "Now," turning to me again, "I do hope you like poetry, Mr. Gray. I dote on it; and when it is wedded to sweet music by the same hand—then to me it is rapture." And her expression suddenly changed from the hard, alert, worldly-wise character it had borne, and became brightened—her eyes turned a little upward, looking dove-like. I could not have believed her capable of such expression. "My dear," she said, turning to Miss Dewyrise, Mr. Gray loves poetry, dotes on it, like me." (I had never said a word.) "Repeat that little lovely song you made to the music yesterday. Mr. Gray will hear you sing it, but then he will only be able to judge it better when he hears it sung."

Miss Dewyrise seemed at first bashful and reluctant; but being appealed to a second time, she crossed her gloved hands in front of her, her fan in one of them hanging down, raised her eyes (which usually sought the ground), and recited, in a low tone and rather sweet voice:—

The soft leaves whisper tho' the winds are still;  
The brook makes music, winding down the hill;  
The trout that leaps runs circles o'er the stream:  
All things that move fulfil a poet's dream.

All things make music, moving while they rest;  
The only discord homes in human breast;  
And, till love turns the discord into tone,  
Man wanders wretched in the world—alone.

Oh, Love, sweet Love, like bird across the sea,  
With music of the spring-time, fresh and free,  
Bring to my heart the sweetness of the spring,  
And show me love, fair love, in everything!

And when she had finished her little bit of effectively quiet elocution the small eyes de-

scended on me with a widening softness of appeal that was pretty, rather. Mrs. Patronille turned to me and said: "Is it not true? Is it not fine? And the music, I am sure you will say, matches it well. She has written hundreds. Is it not a rare gift—a gift to be grateful for?" This time she did wait for a reply, and, in the circumstances, what could I say? I said the piece had sweet lines, was very pretty, and, no doubt, with good music, would be very effective. "I knew it," said Mrs. Patronille. "Sarah," she said, turning to Miss Dewyrise, "you have won a new friend and a powerful one. Mr. Gray is a bosom friend of Mr. Josiah Dutt, the great publisher, and he shall introduce you. Is it not a bargain?" she asked, turning to me. And how could I decline? How Mrs. Patronille had come to know that I had been at St. John's with Dutt, and was not only a friend but a kind of voluntary adviser to him in some lines of literature, I cannot surmise; but it is quite true, and in rather a different sense from what they understand, that these Society women know everybody and everything.

"But come," said Mrs. Patronille, "they want you to sing, dear," and off they went, arm in arm, to the piano. Certainly Miss Dewyrise's playing and singing were fine. Her voice was soft and mellow, and now and then passed into a thrilling keenness. It seemed as though the singing supplied exactly what I had felt the verses lacked in listening to the recital of them.

Very soon after this, Mrs. Patronille came bustling up to me and said, "My carriage is at the door to take us to Sir Peter Short's, where I've arranged for Miss Dewyrise to sing. Good-bye; you shall soon hear about the introduction to Mr. Dutt."

And I did soon hear: for about a week I received from Miss Dewyrise every day a couple of pieces which she had copied out in the most flowing hand, begging me to show them to my friend, Mr. Dutt, by way of preparation for her introduction to him. The more I got, the more of a sense of sameness and monotony—of a want I could not define—became felt by me, and it was with a kind of shrinking that on the fifth day I took them to him. He read them while I waited silent, his keen, hard commonsense asserting itself powerfully, if I could read his varying expression aright.

"Where on earth did you pick up this stuff?" he said, at last, throwing down the MSS. on the desk before him with an audible sigh of relief.

"You call it 'stuff'?" I said.

"Yes," said he, unabashed, "'and nonsense' too, if you like. My dear fellow, it's no use you going to evening parties and getting taken up with fascinating young ladies of a poetic turn," he said. "Come, come, now."

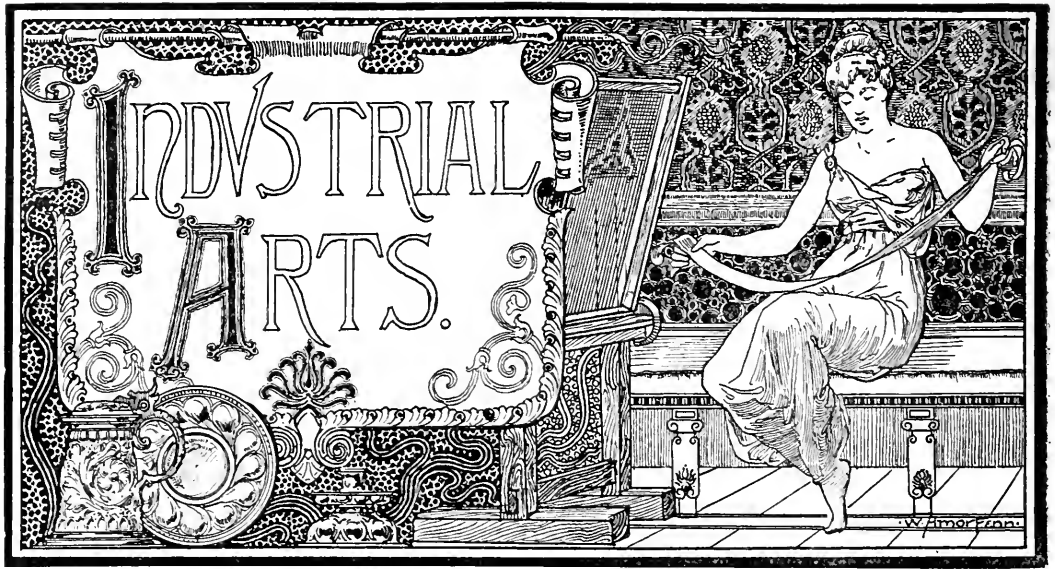
I was troubled, taken aback, though I really expected little else, and I daresay looked stupid enough as I blurted out: "But she isn't fascinating, and I am not sure that she's very young, and she wishes to be introduced to you, and I've promised Mrs. Patronille to introduce her, too."

"Oh, Patronille, is it?" he said. "I know where you are now," with a peculiar meaning smile, "but really, you should have asked if I wished it, before you promised *that*. Look here, my good fellow, I shan't see her, nor read more of her verses, either."

And, say what I might, he stood to his word—whether right or wrong I cannot say; and I had to write and make a score of excuses, as best I could, to Mrs. Patronille, whom I have not met again, nor wish to meet. And I heard just shortly after that Miss Dewyrise was married to a famous tenor singer, who had sung some of her songs with great success, so that I was not alone in my fascination—if fascinated I was—as Dutt said. But a popular tenor may make a good deal even of her songs in such days, and many of them have been published with music and been very popular, and sold largely, bringing in a neat little income. Was Dutt right, or is it that he has no sense for poetry, clever though he be? My lady whom I first took for the muse, I have met often since, and each time I liked her better. She laughed about the verses, and tried to tease me about "my love of poetry," and she pitied Miss Dewyrise, married to a buffoon and mountebank, as she called him.

Of this, of course, I could not judge, never having seen him; but I ceased to be irritated over the *contre-temps* with the verses, as time went on, and I improved my acquaintance with the "Muse," as I ventured to call her.

Appearances are often very deceptive, truly; and tastes do differ. Dutt laughs whenever she is mentioned, but says nothing.



## SILK WEAVING.

BY KINOTON PARKES.



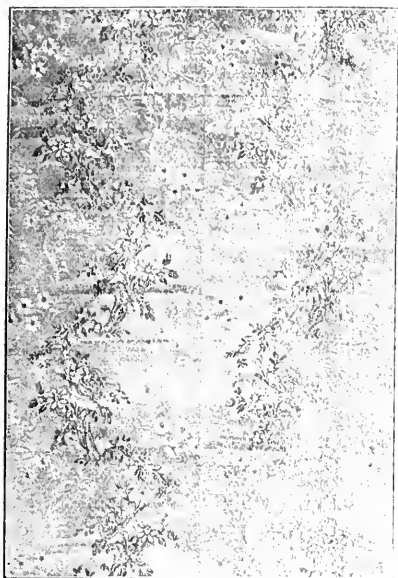
SILKEN fabrics have always been, and are, the most desired and most desirable materials for the clothing of the fair sex: and not unfrequently, at certain periods of history, they have formed

a considerable portion of the wardrobes of the sterner sex as well. The Bible does not tell us of silken raiment, and where the word silk occurs in the English version, it is generally regarded as a mistranslation. We may, therefore, assume that silk was unknown to the peoples treated of in Holy Writ. In the history of our own country, and even more so in the histories of other countries, we may find many references to silk attire. And even in later ecclesiastical history, we find that silken vestments formed an important part in the temporal state and grandeur of the Christian Church. Vestments of the most beautiful description are still in existence, indicating how much attention was paid, particularly in the Mediæval Church, to outward display in connection with various rites and ceremonies. But for the early history of silk, we have to go much further back than even the dawn of the Christian era. Nearly three thousand years before the birth of Christ, the Chinese

produced silken fabrics, and managed to preserve the secret of their manufacture for a long period of time: and it was not till the same time, in the third century of the Christian era, that the knowledge of silk manufacture penetrated through Corea to Japan. The gradual promulgation of silk cultivation took a westward direction, and from China it spread landwards to India, which some fifteen hundred years ago became celebrated on this account, and has since that time retained the art. As it is said, westward the tide of empire flows, so the tide of sericulture, as silk production is called, flowed, and Persia and the countries of Central Asia became silk producers.

The earliest references to silk in Europe are to be found in Aristotle, and Pliny repeats what his predecessors relate concerning the silk-worm. Silken materials were imported into Europe from the East, but in such meagre quantities that they were regarded as signs of the most indulgent luxury, and only emperors and great noblemen possessed even the smallest specimens of them, for they were worth their weight in gold. Indeed, many of them in after years became veritable cloths of gold or silver, for in the weaving of silken fabrics, so much gold or silver in the form of extremely thin ribbon was interwoven with the silk. Byzantium became the great seat of the western silk trade, and it was established there by





BROCADE NO. 11.

means of two Persian monks, who had for long lived in China and learnt the whole art. They are said to have brought silkworms from China, and to have established them in this great and glorious city, famous in history and in art. The Saracens afterwards became experts, and, by many existing fabrics bearing Saracenic de-

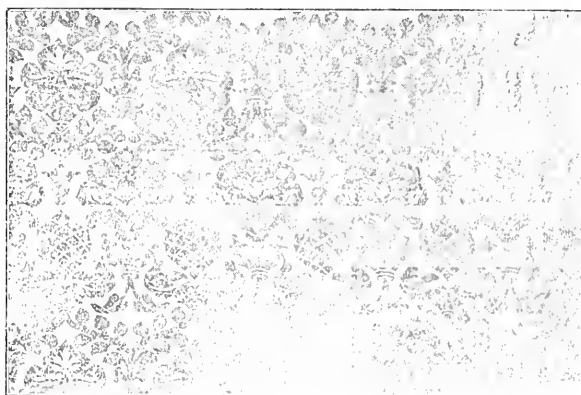
signs, it is possible to trace the gradual spread of the manufacture in Southern Europe, in Italy, and even as far west as Sicily. The introduction of the making of silk in France was in the reign of Louis XI., who had weavers at work at Tours.

Although Henry VI. attempted the introduction of an English silk industry, it was not till 1585, when a number of Flemish refugees engaged in silk manufacture in this country, that the industry seemed to get a hold. But it was not till the persecution of the Huguenots, caused by Louis XIV.'s revocation of the Edict of Nantes, that English silk manufacture assumed important proportions. Then it was that France lost more than a million of its most industrious and cleverest citizens. England gained

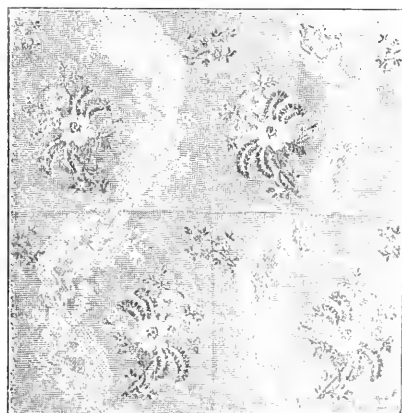
enormously by the transaction, for, until lately, English silks were the only formidable rivals of French silks, and more than that, other new trades were also introduced into England with which, however, we have nothing to do now. Spitalfields, Macclesfield, and Leek, among other places, received the refugees from the religious persecution raging in their own country, and the French Protestants, on new soil, resumed their old industries with renewed vigour. In London an incorporated society of silk throwsters was established in 1629, and in Leek, besides the fact that it is still a silk centre, there is actually a locality of the town known as Petty France, while many of the local personal names are clearly of French origin. Since the advent of the Huguenots, English silk manufacture has gradually increased in importance, although to a far less extent than that of France.

As the history in time of silk is of quite a romantic nature, so is its natural history full of interesting material. Silk is a natural product of a fibrous nature, formed by what is known as the silkworm, which is the larva of the

silk moth. The life cycle of a moth consists of various stages of development, but, unlike those of other animals, these stages are marked out clearly; and at certain periods sudden and important changes occur, which seem almost to mark out the animal as having more one than indi-



DAMASK



BROCADE.

viduality. These stages are the larva, the chrysalis, and the fully developed moth. It is the middle stage which is of the greatest interest,

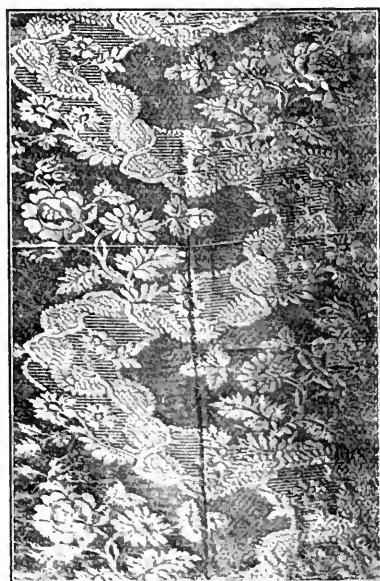


BROCADE (NO. 2).

as in this stage the worm is spinning its cocoon, or covering itself in a coat of threads as much as 4,000 yards long, in which the larva becomes quiescent until the moth is ready to appear. It is this thread which is the raw silk, and it is obtained from the cocoons by destroying the larva inside and unwinding from the cocoon. The most important variety of silk-producing moth is known as *Bombyx Mori*, on account of the fact that it feeds on the leaves of the mulberry tree. Of late years a large and increasing business has been done with a moth called the Tussah moth, and from India enormous quantities of Tussur raw silk are now imported to this country. Tussur silk is called a wild silk, in contradistinction to the silk of *Bombyx*, because the latter is cultivated or domesticated. Much of the success which has attended the introduction of Tussur to the silk industry is due to Mr. Thomas Wardle, whose researches in sericulture are well-known to all concerned in silk manufacture.

The process of separating the thread of raw silk from the cocoon is called reeling, and, for this process, several cocoons are taken and steeped in warm water; the natural gum, which holds the thread together, is then partially dissolved, and the threads loosen. They are then drawn out by the action of the reel, and wound together. This

reel of threads, in the form of a hank, is then taken from the machine, which is extremely simple in construction, and worked by hand, and is ready for the next process, that of winding, which consists merely in winding the loose hanks as they come from the reeling machines upon bobbins. This leads to the process called throwing, which is the combining the threads of raw silk together, so as to form a thread or yarn sufficiently strong for the process of weaving, and is accomplished in successive stages of cleaning, scouring, and twisting. The twisting process results in three descriptions of yarn—singles, a single thread of raw silk from the reeling process: “tram,” two or three raw threads only, and used for the weft or shute; and “organzine,” a yarn twisted or thrown in the opposite direction to that in which the thread is spun and used for the warp. These processes I was enabled to inspect at Macclesfield, in the mills of Mr. J. O. Nicholson, whose courteous invitation I was very glad to accept. We have now the yarns of silk ready for weaving, but if the fabric is to be a coloured one, they have to be dyed the requisite colour, and dyeing is a very important matter, upon which much of the success of silk manufacture depends. We can readily see that, however well a fabric may be woven, and



BROCADE.

however soft and rich the material from which it is made, if the colour or colours of it are not pleasant, the whole thing is a failure. We therefore find that wherever the process of silk weaving

is carried on, there also will be found the neighbouring dye-house, where the colourless hanks of silk are dyed to the hues required for the fabric to be produced. As a rule silk textiles are not dyed in the piece, but the hanks of silk threads are dyed before they are used in the loom.

We now come to the last and most important process of all, when the simple threads of silk, obtained so laboriously from the little silk-worm, are to be woven into the beautiful fabrics which we call generally "silks." The apparatus used is the loom, and the process, as we have already seen, is called weaving. The simplest form of weaving we know of we find prevalent in some savage tribes, and here it consists merely in threading vegetable fibres between each other until a square of loose matting is the result. The first development of this is the simple loom, still found in India, which consists merely of two upright and conveniently adjacent trees to which sticks of bamboo are attached, one at the top and one near the ground. To these horizontal rods a series of threads are tied, and the weaver passes longitudinal threads through the vertical ones from side to side, until a primitive and simple textile or web results. The next development of the loom is the construction of a frame with rollers, to which the warp, as the longitudinal threads are called, can be attached, and upon which the woven material may be rolled as it is woven, and after this the introduction of the shuttle, which contains the woof, or weft, or horizontal thread, and which is thrown from side to side by the weaver as he separates the warp threads to allow it to pass, with an apparatus worked by the feet, and which is called "shedding." When the shuttle has passed, another movement takes place by means of the baton, which beats the weft and brings it into the closest proximity with the previous weft thread. These processes are repeated until a piece of woven silk is the result.

This is, of course, weaving reduced to its simplest form; but, by the kindness of Mr. G. H. Birmingham, of Leek, I have been able to inspect the process of silk weaving as it is carried on at the present day, at his mills, and I found that a great indebtedness is due on the part of all weavers to Joseph Marie Jacquard, of Lyons, who invented what is called the Jacquard machine, which is applied to looms, and which has reduced weaving to its present proportions. Particularly is this the case with patterned silks, to which the invention is

mainly applicable. It is too intricate a piece of mechanism for me to attempt to describe, but the simplification of weaving which it has accomplished is extraordinary. But a word must be said in this connection for one of our own inventors, John Kay, of Bury, who invented the Fly Shuttle, which has resulted in the complicated loom of to-day, with its more rapid production and consequent lessening of price for the lighter varieties of manufacture.

A subsidiary industry of weaving is pattern-designing and card-cutting, which requires an apprenticeship to its practical side, as well as an art training. This consists of drawing out designs suitable for the materials and reproducing these upon the cards which are required for the Jacquard machine.

The varieties of designs and the multiplicity of the things to which silk weaving lends its aid are unlimited: dress silks, furniture silks, handkerchiefs, neck-ties, ribbons, and scores of others will occur to everyone, but there are two main varieties of silk weaving which are of the most considerable importance—damasks and brocades. Although damask derives its name from the town of Damascus, yet the title, *Drap de Damas*, is used in the old inventories for a variety of stuffs.

The pattern or design of a true damask forms part of the fabric, which is practically reversible, a true damask having no back. Taking our fabric on the basis of an eight shaft satin, it is made as follows:—It is woven with the true face underneath; one eighth of the entire warp is raised alternately, until the whole has been raised; this leaves seven-eighths down to make the rich satin. To make the figure, a number of threads are raised by the Jacquard apparatus, according to the design, and one-eighth of these are brought down again level with the satin, as binders, by an apparatus in front of the mail mounting, called a presser harness. The weft is then passed across by the shuttle and struck up to the fell of the cloth by a blow of the reed.

The piece of silk damask illustrated contains 25,000 warp threads, and the weft requires to be passed through 3,960 times in order to complete one yard in length of the woven fabric. The material of the weft may be of silk or cotton, or metal threads, according as the fabric is to be used. The colour of this example is a splendid light green, which remains the same tone in gas-light as in daylight.

Although brocade and broché are names which, at the present time, are indiscriminately used to denote any kind of figured silk, the true brocade was formerly a cloth of gold, or at least of silk,

ground and the small figure on the ground, are made by a running shuttle, which passes straight through the warp and forms the cloth, then a portion of the warp is raised, and a colour slipped



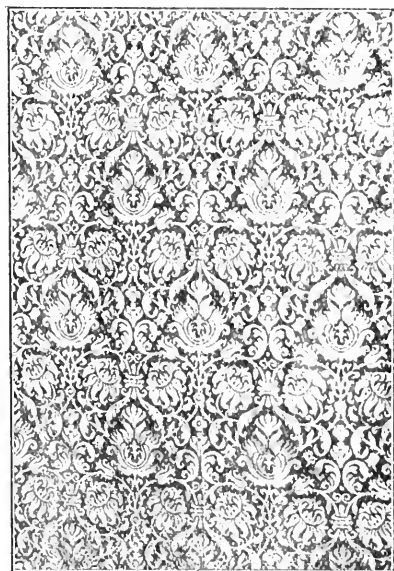
DRESS SILK.

interwoven with precious metal. The terms, brocat, brocame, or brocati, were used to designate all kinds of cloth of gold, and also for the metallic



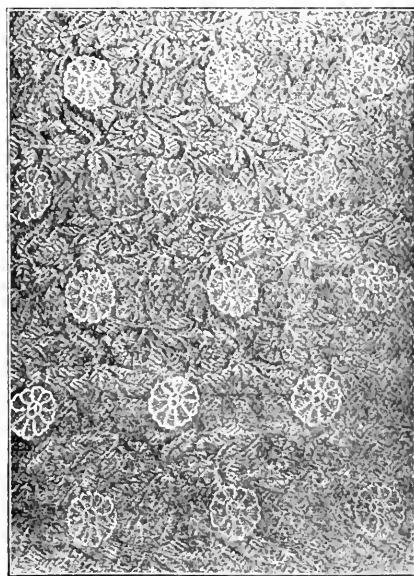
DRESS SILK.

in by a small shuttle to form the flower; this portion is now let down and another portion raised and the next colour put in, and so on, until the



DAMASK.

threads of which they were composed. Any rich silk, with the figure stitched in during the process of weaving, is now termed brocade, but there are two distinct methods of producing the fabric broché and lancé. In the illustration No. 1, the



BROCADE.

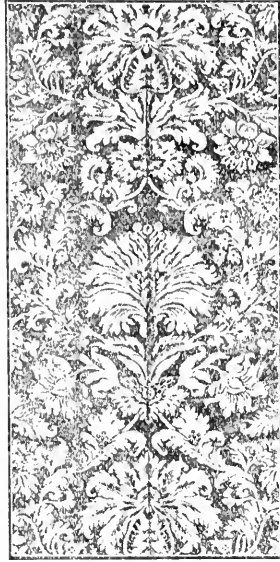
whole of the twelve colours are in, then the ground weft is again thrown in, and so on. This method allows of a good bold figure of many colours to be made, without unduly adding to the weight of the fabric, but the chief use of this process is, from an

artistic point of view, the best, namely, that a variety of colour can be put into the figure across the piece.

When we consider that in this piece of work 7,000 warp threads have to be kept correctly in place, and repaired as soon as broken, and that 300 passes of the shuttle are required to make an inch of cloth, and also that each of the twelve brocade colours require inserting exactly at the proper lift of the warp, we can realise in a small way the extreme carefulness which the weaver is obliged to bestow upon his work. A very skilful weaver can make about two yards per week, barring accidents, of this work.

The example No. 2 is a combination of broché and lancé, the ground is made with a running shuttle, as is also part of the coloured flower and the coloured wavy stripe, the remainder of the colours being stitched in, as in No. 1. To prevent the colours, when not being required to show on the face, floating on the back of the cloth, they are

tied down, in the process of weaving, by a binding thread. This process of lancé tends to make a thicker and more durable fabric, owing to the figure colours making a backing, and is preferred for upholstery work.



DAMASK.

The loom for brocade weaving resembles that for damask weaving, with the exception that no front harness is required, except where a combination of damask and brocade is being made, but a much larger Jacquard machine is used, as in most cases the warp threads are lifted singly, and the number of cards required to make the pattern is increased tenfold or more; and I have seen a piece of work being made, a combination of damask and brocade, with a design twenty-one inches in length which required twelve thousand cards to complete the repeat of the pattern.

I am indebted to Mr. Bermingham for the loan of the beautiful specimens of silk textiles which accompany and illustrate this article, and for his permission to reproduce the same in these pages.

## THE LITTLE MARQUISE.

BY RACHEL S. MACNAMARA.

DADDY!"

"What is it? Ah, Barbara, you!" and Mr. Desmond looked up dreamily from his Greek tragedy and his tea-cup.

"Here is your egg. Do take it before it gets cold," said Barbara, a girl with grey eyes, creamy skin, and chestnut hair. "See, it is a turkey's egg, too!"

This appeared to have the desired effect of rousing her father, for he stretched out his thin scholar's hand, and, taking the egg-cup-enthroned egg therein, regarded its freckled surface with a loving criticism.

"The queen of eggs, my Barbara. You should have crowned it with wild parsley, as the Grecians of old did to the winners of the games. Bay for you, laurel for me, and crisp wild parsley for the queen of eggs!"

"Would you think it disloyal to eat Her Majesty?" asked Barbara, laughing. "Otherwise her ardour will have considerably cooled by the time you approach her!"

"Barbara, your levity on such a subject is shocking!" said Mr. Desmond, with a twinkle in his mild blue eye. "To heap coals of fire on your head, I shall no longer keep you in ignorance of the fact that our family will shortly be increased by two."

"Is Roland one?"

"Yes—and the other—but you would never guess. It is your cousin Ninon, daughter of the late Marquise de Bellerivage."

"The little marquise, as you used to call her?"

"Yes. She is with her guardian, Lord Arundel, at Lostmere, and I thought I would invite her here. You do not mind, Barbara?"

"Of course not, Dad. I shall be delighted. But"—she murmured to herself as she rose from the table—"I *almost* wish she was not coming at the same time as Roland."

"Roland will be here this evening," continued Mr. Desmond, "but Ninon cannot come until to-morrow. You will like her, Barbara. A dainty little porcelain shepherdess, as I remember her."

"I must gather some flowers before Roland comes," Barbara said.

"Roland is a fool—" began Mr. Desmond, but, as Barbara faced round with flashing eyes, he terminated his sentence thus—"ish young man, my dear. Why do you not use your influence with him to induce him to follow some profession? At present he is under a curse!"

"*What* do you mean, Dad?"

"I mean that he is cursed with some superficial cleverness and £300 per annum."

"But he can write—"

"Yes, pretty verses."

"And sing, and paint a little."

"Ah, a little. There you have his limitations."

"But if there were a necessity—"

"If—if—! But until the necessity arises to use the few brains God has given him in some useful way, Roland will continue to be that abhorrence—a pretty man!"

"Dad, you're cross to-day. Go back to your Greek, and I will gather some flowers. We will let poor Roland alone for the present."

She lightly kissed his forehead and went out into the great hall.

Seven o'clock that evening found her waiting on the steps. A few daffodils were fastened in the front of her white gown.

She had not long to wait, for as she looked, the dog-cart came swiftly round the bend of the avenue, and drew up before the oaken door, with its hospitable inscription overhead, "Welcome to the House of Liberty!"

Barbara's colour came and went, as Roland Moore descended from the dog-cart. She ran half way down the steps to meet him.

"Welcome back to Palace Anne!" she cried, with outstretched hands.

"Thank you for that sweet greeting, Bab," he said, pressing them warmly. "You are prettier than ever, I see. How is my uncle?"

"Quite well, thank you, but rather keen at

present on the necessity of work for young men."

"Ah, I see he has been holding forth on the subject of my shortcomings to you. Now confess, has he not? I hope he has not prejudiced you against me, Bab?"

"Certainly not. I am capable of judging for myself."

"There spoke the irreproachable Sunday-school teacher, my sage cousin Barbara. Have you weighed me and found me wanting, Bab?"

"Don't waste time asking foolish questions," replied Barbara, as she led the way through the hall.

Roland cast an approving eye at her spring decorations.

"By the way, I have a piece of news for you," she said, when they had reached the drawing-room. "You must guess."

"I cannot," he replied. "Do not irritate me, dear, with idle and senseless guessings. I require nothing but your company at present."

"That is just what you cannot get. My cousin Ninon is coming to-morrow."

"Bab! Are you in earnest? And I was looking forward to a quiet time with you!"

"You can have a quiet time with the little marquise now," said Barbara, drily.

"The little marquise! Is that what you call her? What a pretty name! It savours of powder, patches, and red-heeled shoes! Quite a subject for a *rondeau*!"

"Your head as full of versifying as usual, Roley," said Mr. Desmond, who had entered unperceived.

Now, if there was one thing more than another that Roland disliked, it was being called "Roley." *Perhaps* Mr. Desmond knew this.

"I have just published a small volume called 'Vagrant Verse,' uncle," Roland replied.

"Will it bear translation into Greek?" inquired Mr. Desmond.

"I do not know," answered Roland, rather taken aback at this novel test of good poetry, "I have not tried."

"If not," his uncle continued, "do not ask me to read it."

"I should not have done that in any case," responded Roland, drily.

The sounding of the dinner-gong put an end to the discussion.

"We may as well make the most of our only evening, Bab," said Roland, caressingly. "Sit here in this comfortable chair, and I will sing to you."

And in the soft spring twilight he sang love songs to Barbara in his pleasant voice.

Next morning they rode together, in the afternoon they sang together, and at half-past five they stood together on the steps to await the coming of the little marquise.

Lostmere was only twelve miles away, and Lord Arundel was to send her to Palace Anne in his own carriage.

Roland took Barbara's hand in his, and stroked it lightly, sighing, "Farewell to our *"solitude à deux."*

"Don't be foolish," said Barbara, blushing. In her heart she wondered which of them would mind the interruption most.

"*Là voilà!*" said Roland, as a carriage rounded the curve. "Enter the little marquise upon our comedy!"

Barbara drew her hand away, and ran down the steps.

The carriage-door opened, and out stepped the daintiest little creature she had ever seen, with a rose-leaf complexion, fluffy fair hair, and dark-blue eyes. She was clad in a delicate grey gown, with a breast-knot of palest pink roses.

"Welcome to Palace Anne!" said Barbara.

"Thank you, Barbe—for I suppose you must be Barbe—" replied Ninon, kissing her cousin on both cheeks. Then, holding out her hand in the friendliest fashion to Roland, she said, "Is this another cousin?"

"No, it is *my* cousin, Mr. Moore."

"But if he is your cousin, is he not mine also?" asked Ninon, in a pretty bewildered way. "I cannot master the intricacies of your English relationships."

"If you would only take me for one I should be charmed," said Roland. "After all, why not?"

"Why not?" echoed Barbara. "Let us all be cousins together. Would you not like a cup of tea, Ninon, before you go upstairs?"

"I should delight in it."

Barbara led the way to the drawing-room, the other two following.

"Is not this a charming house?" said Ninon, artlessly. "And my cousin Barbe, is she not charming too?"

"All women are charming. Do you know the name we have given you, Mademoiselle?"

"No."

"The little marquise!"

"Ah, the dear old name!" she cried, clapping her hands. "That is what poor maman used to call me. I rejoice to hear it again."

"It suits you to perfection. Come, sit here, and I will bring you your tea."

He pulled forward the chair Barbara had sat in last night.

"Ah, that is good!" she said, sinking among the downy cushions with a restful sigh. "Thank you—cousin. Barbe, I do love your Ireland. It is so green and pretty. And your dear home, with its words of welcome, I know I shall love it too. I feel I shall be happy here."

"I hope you will," said Barbara. "I fear it is rather wild for a fairy like you."

"I know I shall love it," repeated the little marquise, smiling up into Roland's face as she took her porcelain cup from his hand.

"I hope you will love us too," he said, "that is your first cousinly duty."

"I love Barbe already!"

"What inference am I to draw from that?"

"Oh, there is Monsieur!" cried the little marquise, running to meet Mr Desmond. "Ah, Monsieur, I rejoice to see you again."

"You are welcome to Palace Anne, child," said he. "But I suppose that I shall have no peace now that there are two girls to chatter."

"Ungallant Monsieur! Why do you say we chatter?"

"Ovid tells us that 'were a woman's tongue cut out and thrown upon the ground, it could not forbear muttering'—(or chattering)—'even in that posture!' Who am I that I should contradict him?"

"Never mind him, Ninon," said Barbara, linking her arm in her cousin's, "let us go and dress for dinner."

Some time later the two girls descended the stairs. Roland was sitting in a carved chair in the hall, scribbling something. He looked up at the sound of the rustling gowns.

Barbara was dressed in white, and the little marquise wore an old-world gown of palest green velvet, with ruffles of priceless lace. It was, perhaps, too rich a gown for the occasion, but it



was eminently picturesque, and suited her dainty loveliness to perfection. Barbara regarded her with mingled feelings of admiration, liking, and a sensation—too faint for jealousy—too present for regret.

"A study in spring tints!" cried Roland, as they came towards him.

"A study in brown, or a brown study," said Barbara gaily. "Confess you did not hear us until we came quite close?"

"What were you writing—cousin?" asked the little marquise.

Roland flushed slightly. "Only a *rondeau*," he said, looking rather deprecatingly towards Barbara. "A mere nothing, though suggested by you, little marquise. Shall I read it?"

"By all means."

"It is called 'My Lady's Shoe.'" And he read in his pleasantly modulated voice:

"MY LADY'S SHOE."

"My Lady's Shoe unbounded sway  
Holds o'er my heart, and none can say  
What coquetry its movements plan,  
In union with the painted fan  
She flirts in such a dainty way.  
Its diamond buckle-clasp to-day  
Flashed as her dark eyes sometimes may;  
Nought marks my lady's will as can  
My Lady's shoe!

Its red heel taps—capricious—gay,  
Along the corridor. In play  
It tramples on the heart of man!  
I meant her portrait to essay  
But I have got no farther than  
My Lady's shoe!"

"Is it really about me?" asked Ninon, her rose-leaf cheek a shade rosier. "How very charming of you! But I am not such a coquette as that. Nevertheless, will you give me a copy?"

"With pleasure. Do you like it, Bab?"

"'Tis pretty," said Barbara, her lip slightly curled, as she thought how Roland had conceived the verses long before Ninon's arrival.

"Pray read me some more," said Ninon, "I think your poems charming."

"I fear you must exercise self-denial for the present," said Barbara. "There is the dinner-gong."

"Self-denial is a virtue I admire exceedingly—in others," said Roland.

"Plagiarism from Oscar Wilde," said Barbara. "Come in to dinner."

"Why are you so hard on me, Bab?" he murmured, as he took her in.

"I wish you would be yourself," she said, "and not an echo of cleverer people."

"That is rather strong," he replied in a hurt tone.

During dinner, Barbara's heart smote her for her cutting speech. Vain and shallow as Roland was, all her love was given to him—and not unsought; for until to-night she had imagined he loved her. Now, it seemed he was taken with the fresh daintiness of the little marquise. All dinner-time he devoted himself to her.

Afterwards, in the drawing-room, he ensconced her in Barbara's chair, and sang her snatches of operatic music and love songs.

Barbara felt she was in disfavour, and tried to make amends.

"Will you sing us the 'Siciliana,' Roland?" she said.

"If you wish."

He sang the passionate throbbing music with his eyes fixed—on Ninon. Barbara turned away, hurt in her turn.

"That is too charming," said Ninon. "Now read us some of your poems."

"I have no wish to inflict my 'echoes of cleverer people' upon you, Marquise," he began, but when she protested, he drew from his pocket a copy of "Vagrant Verse," and, turning over the leaves, said, "You heard your description—This is Barbara's."

He read aloud "The Moon-Statue," and when he came to the words—

"A woman with hair like a cloud,  
And a face that is moon-cold and proud"—

he paused significantly, and then read on to the end.

"I fear you have flattered me," said Barbara.

"Will you not sing us something, Ninon?"

"I could not sing after your cousin," she protested prettily. "Well, if you insist—" with a little shrug—"I suppose I must. Can you play 'In Maien,' cousin?"

"Yes. Shall I play it for you?" and they went to the piano.

It was a pretty sight. The slender figure at the piano—the glow of golden lamplight within the long panelled room—the faint silver of the moon without—the scent of the spring flowers—the tapping of the rose-sprays against the windows—and above all, the fresh young voice filling the air with music.



Barbara looked and thought how well suited the two were.

"If I have lost him," she murmured, "it is my own fault."

Song after song followed, and then they tried a duet. It was as if they had forgotten Barbara's very existence. She took up a book and turned over the leaves. It was "Vagrant Verse," and opened at the "Moon-Statue." She threw it down as if it had stung her. Roland was singing with Ninon the duets *they* had sung that afternoon. She moved restlessly. At last she could bear it no longer, and cried, "Come, Ninon, we had better retire, unless we want to lose our beauty sleep!"

"That fetches me, Barbe," said Ninon, laughing. "I do not want to lose my beauty."

The next day was wild, but fine, and Barbara took Ninon for a drive in the afternoon. The evening set in with storm and rain.

After dinner, to their astonishment, Mr. Desmond came into the drawing-room, and demanded a rubber of whist.

"I'll play with the little marquise," he said, "Roley can play with Barbara."

"Certainly," said Roland, "if Barbara does not object to a very indifferent partner."

"Not at all," replied Barbara, politely.

Ninon looked from one to the other in a puzzled way. Those were not the cousinly relations she had imagined existed between them.

The evening progressed slowly. Barbara and Roland exchanged a few polite remarks now and then. Ninon yawned delicately behind her fan, and Mr. Desmond occasionally interrupted the progress of the game to inquire the meaning of his partner's play.

At eleven they separated.

When Ninon reached her room, she sank into a chair.

"Quel bêtise! I should die if I had any more of these evenings. Why could they not let us sing as before—cousin and I? And Barbe, she is so cold! Does she grieve that Roland likes me, I wonder? Does she wish him for herself? Folle! As if I should marry a dull Englishman!"

If these were her sentiments, why did she flush rosily?

"She need not mind. I shall soon depart, and they will be happy ever after. I suppose cousin will not regret me—much."

She gave a little sigh, and went to bed.

A week passed.

The weather was still stormy, but it cleared towards evening, and the sun set in a yellow glow behind dark bars of cloud.

Barbara proposed that they should walk towards the sea. Her remark was hailed with delight.

Roland was tired of being angry with her, and wanted to make friends.

She was ready before Ninon, and Roland met her as she came down the stairs.

"Is it to be always war, Bab?" he said.

"As you like," said she, coldly.

Then the little Marquise tripped down the stairs, and they all set off.

Ninon was in the highest spirits, but Barbara said little.

She led the way through the shrubbery, along a bare moorland road, with its stretches of cut turf and black deep pools at either side, then across some fields, until they knew by the cold air on their faces and the long wash of the waves, that they were near the sea.

"Look!" said Barbara, going to the edge of the cliff.

A curious sight met their eyes. They were looking down on a little bay, guarded by long black rocks. The strand was full of sea-weed and sea-weed gatherers, some with horses and high, crate-like carts. Men, ay, and women too, were standing waist-deep in the water, gathering in the storm's gift with rakes, whose long handles stood outlined against the sky. Everywhere there was movement, and here and there was a sudden red spark where someone had paused to light a pipe. Overhead the moon shone fitfully through shifting clouds.

It was a curiously weird scene. Ninon looked on with interested eyes, and Roland regretted that the gathering darkness prevented him from sketching it.

It was nothing new to Barbara, but it filled her with a vague desire to make amends for her coldness. She slipped her hand into Roland's and whispered penitently, "I am sorry."

He pressed her fingers warmly, and murmured, "Dear foolish child!"

Ninon could not help over-hearing this interlude. Her heart gave a great leap, and then sank down to the very depths. She shivered. "It is cold," she said, "let us go home, Barbe."

"Is this wild country air too rude for your tender cheek, little Marquise?" said Roland, "and are the stones too rough for your light steps? Let me offer you my arm, and you too, Bab!"

"No, thank you," answered Barbara, "I am used to the rough and stony ways."

But Ninon gladly accepted the proffered aid, and by the time they reached Palace Anne, her spirits had almost returned. As they stood in the great hall, she suddenly turned and kissed Barbara.

"I said I should love you, and I do," she whispered, then ran lightly up the stairs.

When she reached her room she threw off her cloak and flung herself on her bed.

"I must go away," she moaned. "I stand in Barbe's light here. It was unfair of me to come and steal him from her. I must go away—oh, cousin!—though it should break my heart. I feel that I could make him love me—but poor Barbe!—and she has been kind to me! He said that he admired self-denial in others. Perhaps if she knew, she would grudge me that little admiration—when I am gone. Gone!" and she covered her face with her hands, then proudly—"Why do I weep for what might never be mine? Come, Ninon, show the spirit of your race, and prove yourself worthy the name of De Bellerivage. *Noblesse oblige!* You shall not take him from Barbe!"

She bathed her eyes, and arranged her hair, and went downstairs, looking every inch a little marquise.

She found Roland and Barbara in earnest converse in the drawing-room.

"You grave people! Come, sing something," she said. "You must make my last evening pleasant." They started.

"Your last evening?"

"What do you mean?"

"Did you not know I only intended to stay a week?" said the little Marquise, bravely. "My guardian will expect me. He is going to take us all to Normandy—to my château."

She did not mention that the trip was not to take place until May. Her heart ached sorely.

"Must you really go?" asked Barbara, after repeated entreaties to stay.

"I must really," replied Ninon, her cheek paling as she spoke. "You have a proverb, 'Duty before pleasure,' have you not? This is my duty, and I

must go. There is some self-denial, too, and you admire that virtue, cousin, do you not?"

"I admire everything you do," said Roland.

"Please do not," she said, as if hurt, "I have lost my taste for compliments. Perhaps it is that I grieve to leave you—all."

"Dear, I wish you were not obliged to go," said Barbara, repentant of her former coldness.

"You make it difficult for me, Barbe. Cousin, sing something."

"The 'Siciliana,' Roland."

"Not that, please," said Ninon, quickly, "anything else you like."

"Then, Bab, will you sing a duet with me?"

Barbara rose, well-pleased, and they sang together.

Ninon looked on, as Barbara had done a week ago. Her eyes filled with bitter tears.

"The Wheel of Life has taken another turn," she thought. "Barbe is up—and I—am down!"

Aloud she thanked them for their music, and saying she must see her maid about packing, she bade them good-night early, and withdrew.

The next afternoon Barbara and Roland stood on the steps to see her depart, as they had watched for her coming.

"She has gone to say good-bye to Dad," said Barbara.

As she spoke, Ninon came across the hall, looking very pale in her dainty grey gown. Her eyes were wistful with unshed tears.

Roland held out a spray of pink roses. "A last offering from your devoted cousin," he said, lightly.

"Thank you," she said, fastening them in her gown. "Good-bye, dear Barbe. When you are very happy, spare a thought for me. Good-bye, Cousin."

She ran down the steps and into the carriage, which drove away. She looked back once with longing eyes; and the last they saw of the little marquise was the flutter of a lace handkerchief as the carriage rounded the curve.

Roland turned to Barbara, and took her hands.

"Let us have no more misunderstandings, Bab. Are you not mine as I am yours?" And Barbara answered, "Yes."

So the sacrifice of the poor little marquise was all in vain, for it was Barbara whom he had always loved!

And she? She had renounced that which never was hers to give!



NEWNHAM COLLEGE

## NEWNHAM COLLEGE.

By L. T. MEADE.



GIRL who wishes to obtain the advantages of an academical course of study has now many colleges to choose from. There is Girton, which I have already described; there are the Women's Halls at Oxford, and the magnificent and luxurious

and Bedford and Queen's are complete in themselves. But Newnham, in one sense quite distinct and apart, in another is in the midst of the keen intellectual life which must always attach itself to our great centres of learning. It is practically in Cambridge, lying just outside the town. It is surrounded by large gardens, and while it is in itself secluded, quiet, the very essence of peace, it is within touch of all that can attract and help in the old University.

This fact alone must give obvious reasons to the minds of many girls for making Newnham the college of their choice.

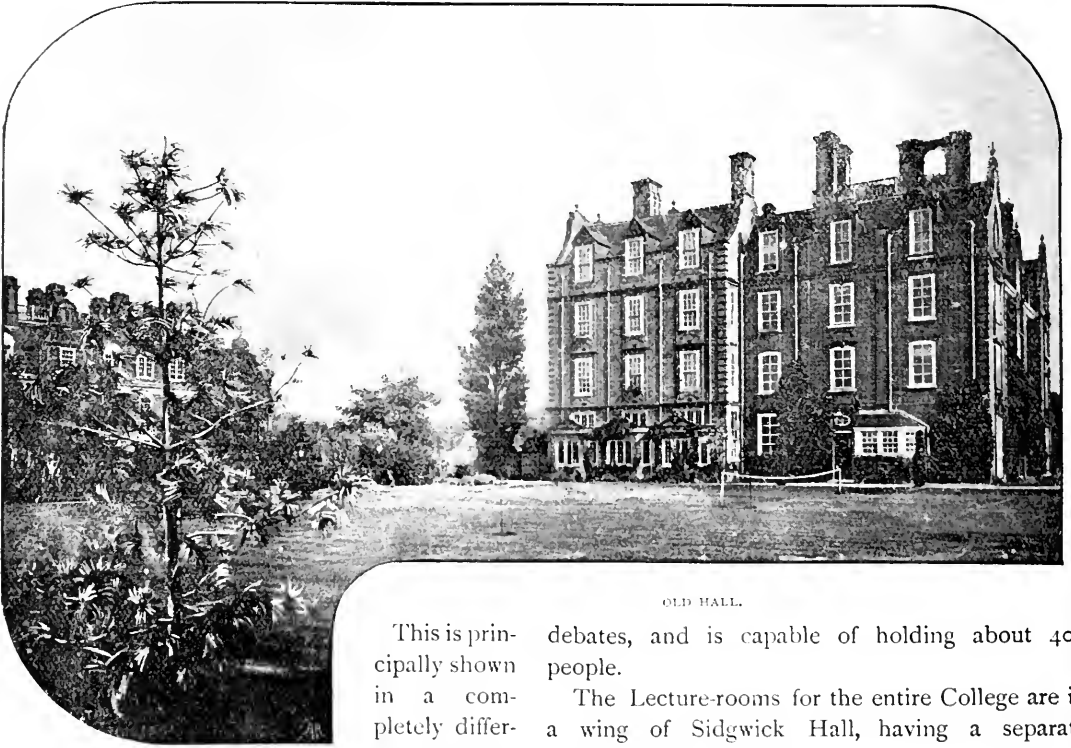
It is less expensive than either Girton or Holloway, and, while possessing all the advantages of the former, and more than all the advantages of the latter, is more home-like than either of these great centres of learning.

But perhaps a brief description of Newnham as it now is will best exemplify these points.

There are, of course, broad lines of resemblance between one college and another. The rules are much the same; the motives, the aims, the ambitions are identical; there is the same sense of good fellowship, the same hearty interchange of work and play. But between Newnham and her sister college of Girton there are also wide distinctions.

Holloway College at Egham; there are the Welsh Colleges, Westfield College, near London, and also, of course, Bedford and Queen's. But for reasons which I am about to mention, I would myself prefer Newnham College to all others as a place for the training of those girls who have by-and-by to fight the battle of life. My reasons for this preference are obvious enough.

To get the full advantage of college training it is well to be in the centre of the intellectual life of one of the old Universities. Girton, splendid as it is, must at times feel the disadvantage of its comparative distance from Cambridge. The Halls at Oxford, while possessing all the attractions of home comforts, depend altogether on outside influences for their scholastic training. Holloway



OLD HALL.

This is principally shown in a completely different arrange-

ment of the building. Girton is all under one roof: Newnham has three separate halls which are now connected each with the other.

debates, and is capable of holding about 400 people.

The College stands on a site of about eight and a-half acres. It contains accommodation for the Principal and Vice-Principals and Resident Lecturers, and, including the new buildings lately finished, for about 180 students. Each Hall is complete in itself. It has its own dining-hall and reading-room, and other rooms for the common use of the students. It is presided over by its own Principal, and is as complete and home-like as possible.

The Lecture-rooms for the entire College are in a wing of Sidgwick Hall, having a separate entrance and a staircase.

As at Girton, all students who wish to enter Newnham College must pass an Entrance Examination, or some other recognised test examination. The standard is not specially difficult, and a well-taught girl can pass in the required subjects with ease and credit.

The College fees vary according to the room occupied by the student. The ordinary fees are twenty-five guineas a term for one room. This includes all charges for board and lodging, and for tuition, with one or two exceptions. The fees for the term are payable in advance to the Head of the Hall in which the student lives.

The three Halls are called :—Clough Hall, after Miss Clough, the late beloved Principal of the College; Sidgwick Hall, after Professor Sidgwick, who was the first promoter of the Lectures for Women in Cambridge, and after Mrs. Sidgwick, who has succeeded Miss Clough as Principal of the College; and Old Hall, so called because it was the first Hall of residence.

The history of Newnham College is simple enough. In 1871, in consequence of the demand from women at a distance to share the advantages of the Cambridge Lectures, Miss Clough took charge of a small house which accommodated five students. As this number increased, funds were raised to build the Old Hall, which was opened under the care of Miss Clough, in 1875. In the following year this house was found insufficient for the numbers of girls who wished to come into residence. Temporary arrangements were made for them until Sidgwick Hall was completed and

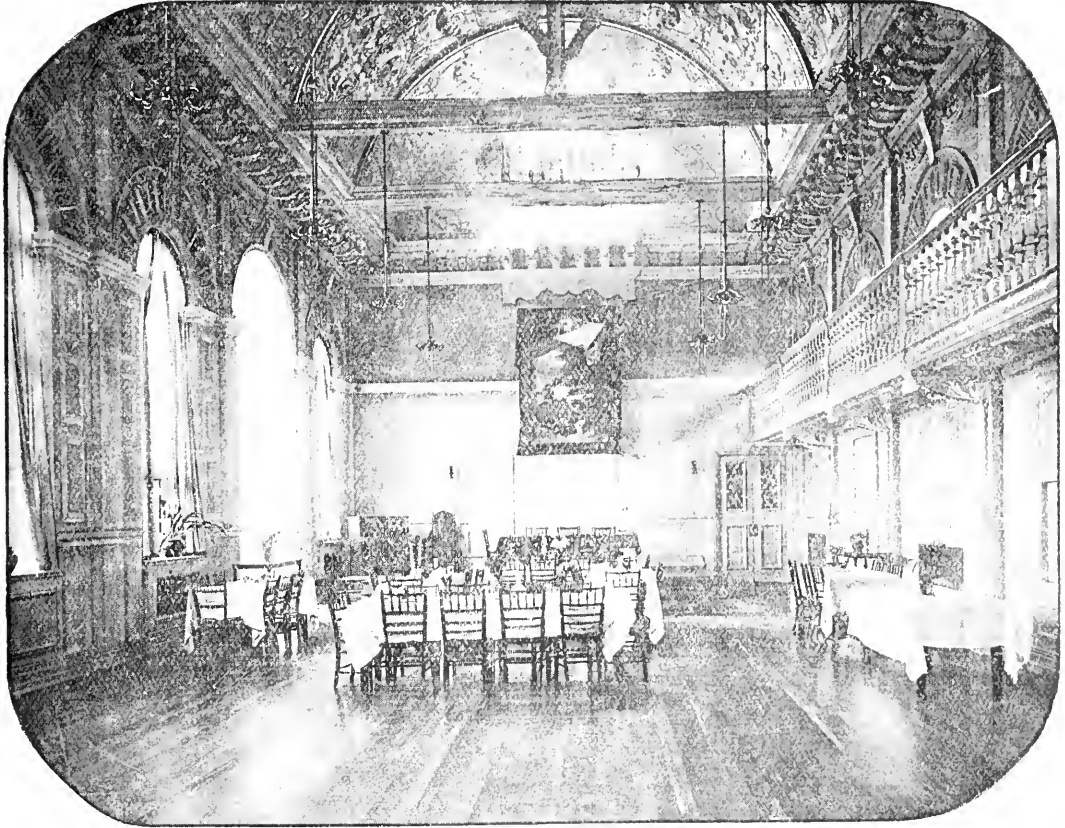
All the members of the College meet at times in the beautiful dining-hall of Clough Hall, which is one of the principal features of the place. This noble room is also used for College concerts and

opened. Clough Hall was added to the houses of residence eight years later.

Newnham College is not richly endowed, and has had a struggle for existence from the very first, but the energy, enthusiasm, and untiring perseverance of its founders have never flagged, and now the beautiful Halls, in their picturesque gardens, must abundantly reward the efforts which have been made in behalf of the happy girls who live and learn there.

was the head of the whole College, and undoubtedly gave it a tone which one so high-principled, so sympathetic, and so in touch with all that is best in modern thought, alone could inspire.

As I write, I recall words which Miss Lee, the principal of Old Hall, wrote about Miss Clough, in *Atalanta*, shortly after her death. She spoke of her as the one to meet and welcome all new arrivals at the College. She herself, if possible.



DINING HALL.

This arrangement of Newnham College into three Halls, or rather, three complete Homes, has been followed by the happiest results. The Principals and the girls are drawn closely together: there is no sense of immeasurable distance between those who instruct and those who learn. Each Principal is looked upon by the girls committed to her care as the kindest of friends and counsellors. Even to those who only knew her slightly Miss Clough's kind and beautiful face was enough to inspire any girl with a sense of enthusiasm. She

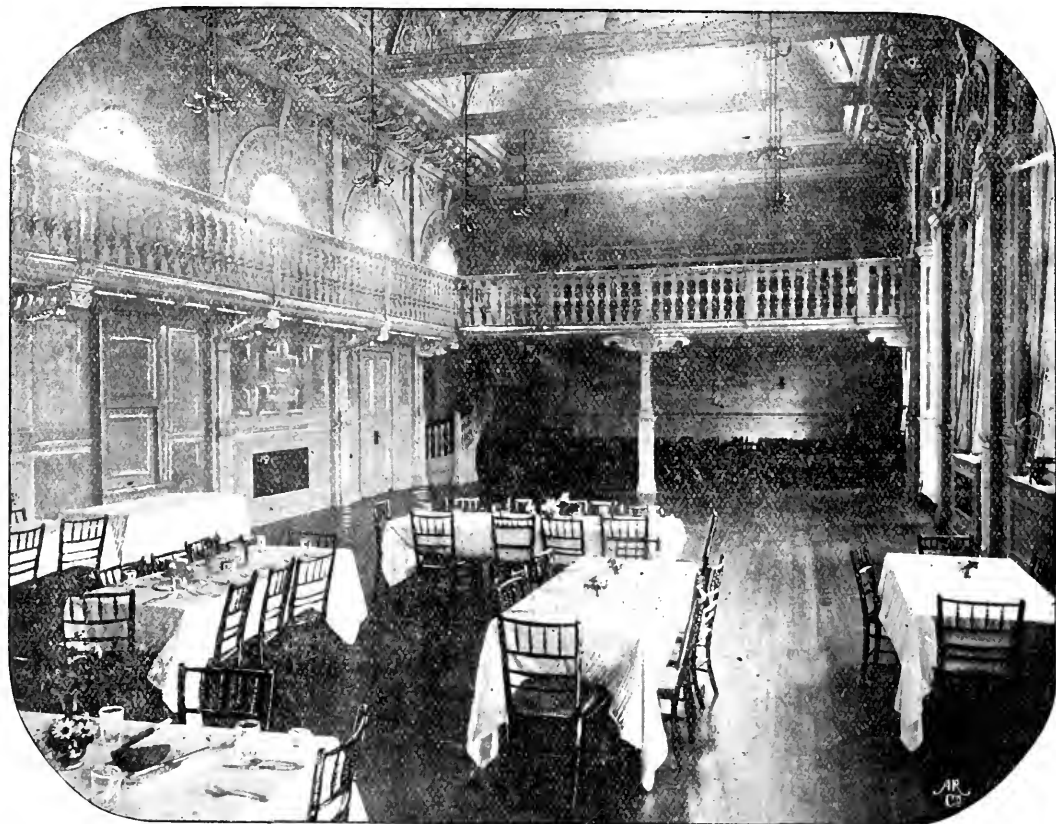
introduced the new students to their future rooms. She carefully questioned each student with regard to her studies in the past, and counselled her as to the best subjects to take up in the future. She took an individual interest in each girl, and knew much about each and all of them.

"It was not," Miss Lee said, "a professional interest that she took in her students: she really cared for them: she had a sort of mental vision of each one, of her character, of her friends, of the life she was living."

Her kindly and genial presence has now passed away, but the Newnham girls have been made happy by the residence amongst them of their much-loved friends, Professor and Mrs. Sidgwick. But for the indefatigable exertions of these true friends to all girls, Newnham would not exist. Mrs. Sidgwick is now the Principal of the College.

One of the marked differences between Newnham and Girton is to be found in the students' rooms. At Girton each girl is the happy possessor of a

room which has to act as bedroom is skilfully shut away with screens and curtains by day, while at night, in cold weather, its occupier can have the advantage of her sitting-room fire to warm and air her bedroom. It is surprising how soon girls adapt themselves to this double arrangement. How clever and skilful are their many contrivances to shut away the bedroom element, and promote that of the drawing-room! In short, few visitors would guess that the inviting-looking sofa, with its



DINING HALL.

small sitting-room and small bedroom attached. At Newnham, on the contrary, the students have, as a rule, only one room a-piece, which has to do duty as study, sitting-room, and bedroom combined. On first hearing of this arrangement the natural feeling is undoubtedly in favour of the more luxurious order of things at Girton, but second thoughts show that the Newnham plan has some advantages of its own. In the first place, the double room is necessarily larger, and therefore more airy. The part of the

oriental covering, may have to do duty at night as a place for repose. The impression these students' rooms gave me was all that was charming. They are quaintly contrived with odd windows peeping out in unexpected corners. The decoration is simple, and the young owners allow one to get a peep at their individual characters and tastes in the adornments, the photographs, the books, which are scattered freely about.

The life at Newnham is much the same as at Girton in its details. There is abundance of time

for both work and play. There are the usual out-of-door games, the usual Societies, Clubs, &c., which characterise more or less all College life.

The spirit of earnestness is very marked, both in the life and on the faces of the young girl undergraduates. The greater proportion of them are obliged by circumstances to prepare for the battle for daily bread. On the period of preparation a good deal depends; all the girl's own future, and perhaps the future of others, who look to her to help them. In these days of brave women, such circumstances, under such training, are little likely to daunt her.

I recall two visits which I paid to Newnham. One in the merry month of May, when the famed "Backs" of the Colleges were in the perfection of their spring beauty, and all the world was in the rapture of early promise.

I was received by Miss Lee, who took me over the College, introduced me to the other Principals, and to Miss Clough in particular, and kindly answered my numerous questions with regard to Newnham and its ways. I lunched in Hall, and

talked to the students, and, in short, obtained a sort of bird's eye view of the life which they led. All those to whom I spoke were enthusiastic with regard to the work done, and hopeful as to its future results. Miss Lee assured me that there were no cases of break-down from over mental strain, and I certainly saw no signs of such a possibility in the many vigorous girls whom I met.

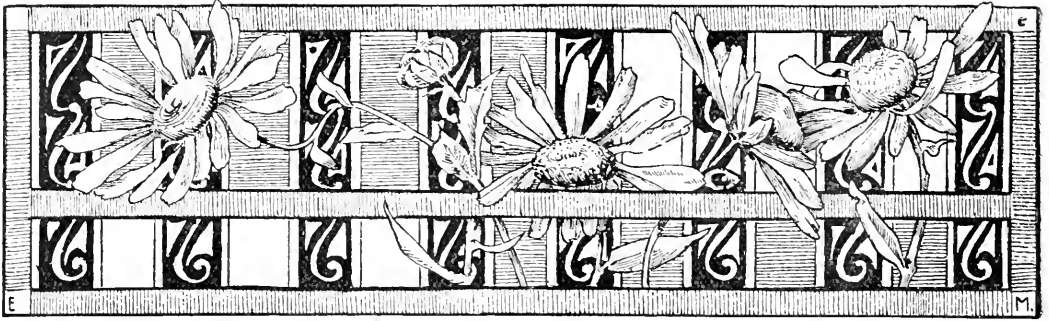
A couple of months ago I went again to Cambridge, visited Newnham, and had the privilege of a talk with Mrs. Sidgwick. She and Professor Sidgwick were to come into residence early in the present year. She told me much with regard to the College, its past and present, and showed how strong was her sympathy in favour of all movements which can elevate and help women. She was enthusiastic as to the good effect of College training on the girl mind. Quite apart from the amount of knowledge gained, the combined discipline and freedom, the frank intercourse with the highly-trained minds of their Principals, give to the students a power of dealing with things in general which cannot be too highly appreciated.

## LOVE THE PITIFUL.

IF you should see a stranger in the street  
 Like to an angel as to air and eyes,  
 Albeit an angel going in disguise,  
 Exceeding sorrowful, exceeding sweet—  
 If one thus pitiful you chance to meet,  
 Too fair, too gentle for the worldly town,  
 Looking all tenderly, but all cast down—  
 Fail not, ere passing by, him fair to greet:  
 For this is Love—poor Love, divine and sad,  
 Most desolate, though making many glad,  
 And very needy, though he maketh rich,  
 Who wanders wearily to find a mate,  
 A soul of equal sympathy, the which  
 His wistful patient soul may satiate.

W. ST. HILT BOURNE.





## WHITE TURRETS.

AN OUTLINE.

BY MRS. MOLESWORTH,

*Author of "Carrots": "The Palace in the Garden"; "A Charge Fulfilled";  
"The Red Grange": "Studies and Stories," etc., etc.*

### CHAPTER I.

"HERTHA."

A DULL afternoon in November. In London, too, where, though bright and beautiful November days are not utterly unknown, they are, it must be allowed, the exception.

A not very lively scene indoors either.

A large—too large for the present purpose at least—concert room in a public building, very far from well filled, and somewhat dimly lighted; the dimness aggravated by a suspicion of fog.

"Rather an unlucky day, I fear," said one lady to her next neighbour. "Still, at this season, what can one expect?"

"And after all," was the reply, "the dull season is the best for charity things. People—such of them as are in town—are glad of something to do."

For the concert was one for a benevolent object, not seemingly a very popular one, or possibly merely but little known. It had been difficult to collect the performers, more difficult to obtain the lady patronesses, most difficult of all to sell the tickets. And as a natural consequence, but few had been sold.

"The programme is a very fair one," resumed the first speaker, glancing at it as she spoke.

"I'm glad you think so," replied the other lady, who had had some hand in getting up the concert. "That last violin solo was a little too long."

"Perhaps so—but still—the audience was very

attentive; more than attentive indeed. Just look at those two girls—I have been watching their faces. They seem quite absorbed and delighted. Look at them now. What pretty girls they are, too!"

Mrs. Balderson, for such was the name of the second speaker, smiled. Her companion's remarks pleased her.

"They are two young friends of mine," she replied in a lower tone. "I put them in front so as to see the performers well. They are full of interest in everything. They are staying with me for two or three weeks—their first real visit to London."

"Indeed. How you must enjoy having them! Are they relations?" came next.

Mrs. Balderson answered in a semi-whisper till a slight rustle of expectancy warned her that the momentary interval between the long solo and a song which came next, was over, and she relapsed into dutiful silence.

The sisters in front had been talking also, though in subdued tones.

"Celia," said the elder of the two, a handsome eager-faced girl, with brown hair and eyes, "Celia, are we not lucky? Do you see what the first song is?"

"I saw it ever so long ago, but I did not tell you. I thought it would be such a surprise. I wish you hadn't seen it, till you heard it," said the younger girl.



"What an Irishism!" returned the other, laughing. "You mustn't count on my short-sightedness, you see," for Winifred, the elder girl, was a trifle shortsighted. "I am very glad I saw it. I like the pleasures of anticipation."

She did not look her age, though she was fond of impressing upon her friends that she was "no longer very young." Her complexion and the rounded outlines of her face might have been in keeping with seventeen or eighteen. Only a certain tone of decision, a slight, very slight touch of brusqueness, made her twenty-four years credible. Late hours and heated rooms: the wear and tear of over amusement or over excitement, had nothing to answer for in the case of these country girls—country girls, in a sense, of the old-fashioned kind.

Celia, who was not yet twenty, was prettier than her sister; taller and fairer—a more flower-like creature—with an entire absence of self-consciousness, born to a certain extent, perhaps, of her absolute reliance upon Winifred, which added curiously to her charm.

"So do I," she replied. "I like to know the name of the singer and to picture her to myself beforehand—especially when she is going to sing anything one loves *so* dearly as——" and she mentioned the song (an old ballad which I will not name, as I should like my readers to think of *the* old ballad they care for most). "If she is ugly or ungraceful I shall just shut my eyes after the first glance and try to forget her. But her name is—pretty? no, not exactly, but nice somehow, and rather queer. "Hertha Norreys." Did you ever hear it before, Winifred?"

"'Norreys,' spelt like that, is a very good name," said Winifred the all-wise, "but 'Hertha,' What is it I know about 'Hertha'? we must look it out in our 'Christian names,' Celia, when——"

But a touch on her arm from the quicker eyed Celia, silenced her, and like their chaperone and her friend they grew mute, more than mute, motionless with interest which soon developed into an intense feeling, as they watched the new comer quietly making her way to the front of the platform. Saw her, and soon *heard* her. Yet the two perceptions seemed almost as one. From that first day, it was and ever remained to both, to Winifred especially perhaps, impossible to think of Hertha Norreys in her absence except as

singing, impossible to hear elsewhere the familiar notes of her favourite songs without seeing *her*.

For her songs as a rule were well-known and simple. Ballads familiar to most of us—the kind of thing which is, in great measure, "made" by the artist; which may be "marred" into utter nonentity.

And—she was not, no, certainly not "pretty," and by no means "to the multitude" beautiful, though the word describes less inadequately than a poorer one the impression she made on the "some." An impression which after knowledge of her never lessened or effaced. She was not very tall, though of what used to be considered more than average height for a woman: nothing in or about her was startling or even striking. Her features, though in almost perfect proportion, perhaps for that very reason, never provoked admiration of their individual merits; her eyes, clear and sweet, could light up with affection or with occasionally a flash of consciousness almost approaching the inspiration of genius, into rare beauty; her whole face, her whole personality spoke above all of simple yet powerful goodness, the true, large-hearted, thoughtful goodness of a noble woman.

At this time Hertha Norreys was twenty-eight.

The Maryon sisters—for Maryon was their surname—sat, as I said, in more than silence, while the wonderful—yes, wonderful I must call them in their perfect purity and sweetness—notes floated over them; now in joyousness, now in pathos, to die away at last in unutterable regret, as dies the wind on an autumn evening.

She was "encored" of course. Though not in the first ranks of vocalists, for her voice was of no astounding compass, Miss Norreys was allowed on all lands to be "very good, very good indeed in her way," and in herself she was a favourite with many, though not with all, so it was the proper thing, especially on an occasion like the present, when she gave her services gratuitously to applaud her heartily.

And till she had reappeared and sung again the last verse of the ballad, neither Winifred or Celia spoke or moved.

Then came—from Celia—the first half timid words.

"I am so glad she sang the last verse over

again," she whispered. "Anything else would have spoilt it."

"Of course," said Winifred, and her tone was a little impatient. But in a moment ashamed of her hastiness she spoke again. "Oh, Celia," she said, "I am not cross. But I seem so—so worked up. Isn't she *wonderful*? Not her singing only, and after all, I know you understand music better than I do—but the whole of her—her face, her way of moving, even her dress? It was just perfect."

"Blue grey bengaline—that lovely shade," said Celia, in whom there was now and then a queer, sudden matter-of-fact-ness which a superficial observer would rather have expected to find in Winifred. "And it fitted so well—so naturally, you know."

"Everything about her is natural—that's the beauty of it," Winifred replied, repressing her indignation at hearing the texture of her divinity's garments put into vulgar words. "I wonder Celia does not tell me how many yards of stuff there must be in the dress," she said to herself. "Everything about her is natural—at least in perfect harmony," she repeated, and then she gave a deep sigh. "Celia, is she to sing again?" she enquired in a low voice.

"Yes," Celia replied, consulting the programme she held, "Once—no, twice—once alone and another time in a trio or quartette rather. I daresay it is some kind of glee: the name sounds like that."

"I shall not care for that," said Winifred, "but oh, I am so glad she is to sing again alone."

She did care for the quartette when it came, for Miss Norreys' voice was far ahead of the others, and then there was the pleasure of seeing her! And the third time she sang, the impression of the first was intensified, for though the song itself was a gayer one, the indescribable pathos of her voice was there too—it was as if a spirit were singing of joys which had once been his, long ago in some golden age of childhood.

After that, Winifred, though she sat silent and apparently attentive, heard but little of the music.

Then came the little bustle of collecting discarded cloaks and furs, and the interchange of remarks upon the performance, as the "assistants," in the French sense, most of whom were women, made their way to the door.

"Winifred, my dear, Celia," said their hostess, when they were waiting with her for the carriage at the entrance, "I want to introduce you to my friend Lady Campion."

"You have enjoyed the concert, I think," said the stranger—the same whose remarks about the Maryon girls had pleased Mrs. Balderson.

"Very much, oh very, *very* much," both sisters replied.

Their chaperone gave a little smile of satisfaction as she glanced at Lady Campion.

"There's some pleasure in having girls like these to take about, isn't there?" the smile and glance seemed to say, and the answering expression in Lady Campion's bright eyes showed that she "understood."

"It is cold, isn't it?" said Mrs. Balderson, drawing her fur-lined cloak more closely round her, with a slight shiver.

"It *looks* cold," replied Lady Campion, as she glanced up and down the street where the incipient fog veiling the dim red still lingering in the sky, and the yellow glare of the just lighted lamps gave a curious, half mysterious effect, not without its charm. "It looks cold," she repeated, "but I don't know that it really is so!"

"It was beautifully warm in the concert room," said Winifred. "London is so much less chilly than the country just now. It *is* so delightful to be here."

"Yet the country is often charming in November: there are days when one longs to sit out sketching," said Lady Campion, who tried her hand at painting as well as at several other accomplishments. "The hazy colouring is so wonderful sometimes."

"If I were an artist," said Celia, who had not yet spoken, "I should like nothing better than to try *London* effects on a day like this. I never saw anything more curious than the lights just now."

Lady Campion glanced at her in some surprise. There was a touch of originality in the remark which she had not expected, for she had already in her own mind put down Celia as "the pretty sister," and Winifred as "the clever one."

Just then Mrs. Balderson's footman hurried up to announce the carriage.

"Goodbye, so glad to have met you," said his mistress, as she began to shake hands with her friend. "But—how are you going home?" she

added suddenly. "You are driving, of course?"

"No, that is to say I have no carriage here. I am going to get a hansom," replied the younger woman.

"Then do come with us, and let us drop you. It will not be out of our way at all," said Mrs. Balderson cordially. "There is plenty of room for us all."

"Thank you very much. Well yes, it would be very nice," replied Lady Campion, who felt rather pleased to see a little more of the two girls. They interested her and she liked to be interested.

So in another moment or two the four found themselves comfortably ensconced in the landau, which like everything belonging to Mrs. Balderson gave one a not unpleasing impression of space and plenty—of a rather old-fashioned kind.

"You are not tired, my dear Winifred? You have not got a headache, I hope?" said her hostess. For Miss Maryon was sitting silent with an absent look.

The girl started, then she smiled brightly. Her smile was very pleasant, relieving her face from the heaviness which in repose was its possible defect. And she had beautiful teeth!

"Oh dear no," she replied. "I never have headaches. None of us do, except Louise, and that, very, very seldom. I was—only thinking."

"I know," said Celia. "Mrs. Balderson, shall I tell you what it is? Winifred has fallen in love, and at first sight."

"My dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Balderson, rather taken aback, while Lady Campion listened with a quiet smile, her interest and amusement increasing.

"Yes," Celia went on, unabashed, "and so have I, though not quite so badly, perhaps. It is Miss Norreys—Miss Hertha Norreys, the singer."

Mrs. Balderson's face cleared.

"She is so—I can't find a word for her," said Winifred, half apologetically, but tacitly pleading guilty to her sister's impeachment. "Isn't she wonderful, Mrs. Balderson?—*you* think her so, I am sure; don't you?" she went on, turning to Lady Campion, in whose face she fancied she read quicker sympathy.

"I think she sings charmingly, in her own way," began the elder woman, who was by no means ignorant of music; "and in herself she is, of course, most—"

"No, no; I agree with Miss Maryon," inter-

rupted Lady Campion, but in a pretty eager way peculiar to her, which took away all shadow of offensiveness from the solecism. "Hertha Norreys, take her altogether, *is* wonderful. I know no one the least, the very least like her."

"You know her, then?" exclaimed Winifred, her eyes sparkling. "You know her privately?"

"Is it her real name?" added Celia. "I thought actors and singers always changed their names, or at least altered them somehow."

"Not always—more often indeed not now-a-days, when they are of her class and position," Lady Campion replied. "She is an 'artist,' so to say, of the modern school, retaining all the privileges that are hers by birth, except—and that 'except,' I fear, means a great deal—that she is, or would be if she did nothing, very poor."

"If she did nothing," repeated Winifred, musingly. "What a different"—then she broke off hurriedly, asking again—"You know her? Privately—personally, I mean?"

Lady Campion nodded her head.

"I have that honour," she said quaintly. "And an honour it is. But here we are at my own door, A thousand thanks, dear Mrs. Balderson—but—now, won't you do me another kindness? Come in and have tea with me, and I shall be able to tell our young friends a little more about my dear Hertha."

Mrs. Balderson hesitated. Her first impulse was always to do whatever she was asked to do, if such doing, that is to say, promised to give pleasure to the asker or anyone else concerned. But, as often happened, for she had learnt by experience, there came second thoughts.

"I fear I must not," she said. "Mr. Balderson and Eric are coming home early. Eric has some accompaniments he wants me to try over before dinner. But I should be very glad for you girls to stay half an hour or so with Lady Campion," she went on, turning to the Maryons. "I cannot send the carriage back again, I fear, for I have had it out so much to-day, but your footman could see them into a hansom; they would be all right?" she added, reverting to Lady Campion.

"Oh, perfectly. I shall be delighted," she replied; and the "delight," without any polite figure of speech, shone in Winifred's eyes, as she eagerly repeated the word "perfectly," adding—"That will be charming. Celia and I want very

much to go about a little alone in hansoms—to learn to manage for ourselves.”

But Celia hesitated.

“Winifred,” she said, “I think one of us *should* write home. We only sent a post-card of our arrival last night, and they will be so looking forward to a letter to-morrow morning. I had planned to write just now as soon as we go in. Might I—could I go home with you, dear Mrs. Balderson, and—and Winifred stay with—”

She spoke nervously, for she *felt* her sister’s disapproval.

“Certainly not,” said Miss Maryon, decidedly. “Of course, if any one writes, it must be I. Not that I think it necessary—in fact, you are absurd, Celia. But still, as you have got it into your head—Thank you a thousand times,” she went on, turning to Lady Campion with a frank heartiness which was one of her attractions. “I am ashamed to make such a fuss. Perhaps Celia is right—but—you will ask us again to come to see you, I hope? I should so enjoy it, and I long to hear about Miss Norreys.”

“I like the elder girl best,” thought Lady Campion, as she entered her own house. “She is so entirely unaffected: the other, it strikes me, is a bit of a prig.”

But it is not the mark of a prig to look guilty: and poor Celia looked decidedly guilty as they drove off again. Mrs. Balderson, gifted with the kind of tact which comes from an extremely warm heart, exerted herself to disperse the little cloud which had arisen, by giving her young friends a few details about Lady Campion.

“She is so clever,” she said: “she can do almost anything she sets herself to. But I think she takes up too many things. She has no children, and few responsibilities; for they are not very rich—just comfortably off—and her husband is much older than she, and manages everything, so her time is greatly in her own hands.”

“*What* a pity she married!” exclaimed Winifred, with extreme conviction. “She might have been really great at something, if she had not thrown herself into trammels.”

Mrs. Balderson smiled, but there was some perplexity in her smile.

“My dear!” she exclaimed, “You don’t mean to say that that is how you look upon marriage—

a happy marriage too, for Sir Hugh Campion is devoted to his wife and she to him—only he spoils her a little.”

“Ah, yes,” said Winifred, “a plaything when not a slave! I have my own ideas, dear Mrs. Balderson, but you mustn’t be shocked at me. You must allow that happy marriages are rare.”

“If you mean perfect marriages—perhaps so. But happy marriages—no, I can’t agree with you. I know as many happy-together husbands and wives, as mothers and daughters, or brothers and sisters, or any other relation,” said Mrs. Balderson.

“I am using the word happy in a wider and deeper sense than yours,” said Winifred, a little loftily. “But we must talk about it some other time. I flatter myself I have thought it out pretty thoroughly.”

“At one, no two-and-twenty?” said her hostess with a good-humoured smile.

“I am four-and-twenty—past,” said Winifred.

They had reached Mrs. Balderson’s house by this time.

“Come and have some tea before you take off your things,” she said. “It is sure to be ready. And then you can write your letters, upstairs if you like. I hope the servants keep up a good fire in your room, Winifred?”

“Oh dear yes,” said Winifred. “Not that we really need one. London houses are so much warmer than country ones, you know.”

“Yes—we have a few advantages over you, I allow,” said Mrs. Balderson. “This house is very warm though it is commonplace. But even that must be a change to you after your wonderful old home, with its quaint nooks and crannies and odd-shaped rooms, inexplicable staircases, and, oh, that reminds me. You must tell Lady Campion all about your ghost when we see her again. Ghosts are one of her manias.”

A slight frown showed itself on Winifred’s face at the words.

“You know I don’t believe in it,” she said. “It is so silly.”

“Oh, Winifred, don’t say that,” exclaimed Celia, with sudden anxiety. “It always frightens me a little when you speak so.”

## CHAPTER II.

## BLACK AND PINK.

ERIC BALDERSON was awaiting his mother—not impatiently, he was never impatient about anything—in the drawing-room, as she had foreseen when they went in. And so was tea, thanks to Eric. He was one of those people in whose case it is not difficult to take the bad with the good, for the latter so decidedly predominated. If slow, tiresomely slow sometimes, he was so considerate; if in a certain sense heavy, he was so entirely to be relied upon, and in unselfish thoughtfulness for others, above all in small matters—for in important ones I cannot endorse the popular axiom that “the best of men are selfish,” he was almost like a woman.

“Now isn’t that nice?” said his mother, appreciatively. “Tea *just* ready. You *are* clever, Eric. Isn’t he a good boy, Winifred? Of course it’s all due to my splendid bringing up, but still he does me credit, doesn’t he?”

Winifred smiled, but did not speak. She knew he was excellent, but she did not care much for Eric Balderson. Celia liked him better.

“I suppose you have learnt to be daughter as well as son to your mother,” she said quietly, as she stood by the table, while this very “tame-cat” young man, as Winifred contemptuously called him, poured out the tea for his mother and her young friends.

“Yes, that’s to say she has had to put up with my feeble efforts in that direction, failing better,” he said. “Now then—I think I have got hers—my mother’s—tea just as she likes it, will you be so good as to tell me of any peculiarities of taste of yours, or your sister’s—cream, sugar, both or neither, or which?”

“Winifred takes no cream—I take both. Yes, I will hand Mrs. Balderson hers and you can look after Winifred. This is mine? Thank *you*,” and Celia seated herself near the tea-table.

“Did you enjoy the concert this afternoon?” young Mr. Balderson enquired. “It was a concert you were at, wasn’t it?”

“Oh, yes, very much, very much indeed,” said Celia. “It was a very nice concert. But *the* thing that we cared for most was Miss Norreys’ singing.”

“Miss Norreys—Hertha Norreys, do you mean?”

“Yes,” said Mrs. Balderson, “these girls have both fallen in love with her, Eric.”

“With *her* as well as with her singing,” said Winifred.

Eric looked up with a comical expression.

“She is very charming, I am told,” he said. “I cannot testify to the fact from personal experience, for—you can’t exactly call a person charming who deliberately snubs you.”

“How do you mean?” said his mother. “I didn’t know you had ever met Miss Norreys, and if you have why should you think she snubbed you?”

“Because she did,” Eric replied simply.

Winifred’s eyes sparkled. Her admiration for Hertha rose still higher.

“Just what I should have expected of her,” she thought to herself.

“My dear Eric,” said his mother with a very slight touch of annoyance in her tone, “I think you talk nonsense sometimes.”

He smiled.

“Sometimes, perhaps, but not always,” he said. But he rose from his seat as he spoke, for he was more than quick at reading his mother’s feelings, and went towards the piano.

“I’ll look out the songs, mother, that I want to try over,” he remarked. “That’s to say, if you are still good for a little practising before dinner.”

“Certainly I am. Indeed we hurried home partly on that account,” Mrs. Balderson replied. “I will run upstairs and take off my things in a moment. And you, dears, will have a little quiet time for your letters, and for resting, if you are tired.”

“I shall be glad to write my letters, but I am not the least tired, thank you,” said Winifred, in her clear, slightly incisive tone, almost as if resenting the kindly imputation.

“I *am*, rather,” said Celia gently.

“I scarcely see how you could help it, after such a busy day,” agreed Mrs. Balderson. “You have been on the go since early this morning. Such a contrast from your regular restful life at home. Not that we Londoners can stand so much fatigue as country people often imagine we can, fancying that a rush is our usual existence.” She was leaving the room as she spoke, but stopped to add,

"Remember I want you to be fresh this evening, though it is only a small party. Your cousin is coming, for one."

"Oh dear," said Winifred, in a half complaining voice, when her hostess had gone, "I forgot about Lennox being in London just now. Mrs. Balderson really need not have troubled to ask him. We have quite enough of him at home."

Eric glanced at her.

"I fear we can scarcely put him off now, except with grave discourtesy," he said. And Winifred could not tell if he was laughing at her or not. "Besides," he went on, "though I cannot hope the fact would carry any weight with it, I am very fond of Lennox. I do my best to see something of him whenever I get a chance."

"Oh yes," said Winifred, coolly, "I know you and he are chums. Well, as long as he does not sit beside me at dinner and entertain me with questions about the cows and the pigs and the old women at home, whom I am more than thankful to forget for a week or two—"

"He shall not sit beside you at dinner; so much I can guarantee," said Eric. And though Winifred thanked him laughingly, as if all that had been said was a joke, she did not entirely disagree with Celia's first observation when they found themselves alone in their own room.

"Winifred," said Celia, "I think Mr. Eric Balderson was *really* rather angry at your tone about Lennox. I heard it in his voice, though he has that dry way of speaking that makes it difficult to know whether he is in fun or earnest."

She was standing in front of the fire—a brightly glowing one—in the large room, which with a dressing-room out of it the two girls shared together. And as she spoke she turned round slowly, and looked at her sister half timidly.

"Well, and what if he were?" said Winifred. "After all, Lennox is our cousin, not his. He does not need to take up the cudgels in the poor dear's defence. It would be very impertinent."

"He would not mean it that way," said Celia, "and though you are so much cleverer and wiser than I, you know, Winifred, onlookers sometimes see the most. Don't you think—considering how things are with Lennox, it would be better always to speak very nicely of him? After all, his caring for you is no crime—you need not *despise* him for it."

"Oh bother!" said Winifred, throwing herself back into a comfortable chintz-covered arm-chair, "perhaps it would be better. But I hate beating about the bush and always thinking such a lot about what to say and not to say. I do like to be natural. However, I'll be more careful. But I am so tired of Lennox and all that dull, humdrum country life, that Mrs. Balderson calls restful and delightful. And so are you, Celia—we are at one on these subjects."

"Of course we are," said the younger girl, "though my feeling is not that I want to leave home, but simply to have—you know what—my chance, my test, which I *cannot* have at home. But you are very good, dear Winifred, not to think *me* impertinent for warning you."

For a moment or two there was silence.

Then said Winifred, raising herself, "I must write to mamma."

A shadow of disappointment flitted across Celia's face, but there was no trace of it in her voice.

"To mamma," she said, "Oh, then I will write to Louise."

"Of course," said Winifred, majestically. "It would never do for *me* not to write first to mamma. Indeed, I don't see that there is any hurry for your writing at all."

She got out her paper and pens as she spoke. Then with the queer mixture of candid self-depreciation which existed in her, side by side with unusual self-assertion, she startled Celia by an unexpected speech.

"About what you were saying of Lennox just now, Celia," she began, her fingers toying idly with the pen she had already dipped into the ink, "do you know, at the bottom of my heart, I don't think I believe that he *does* care for me?"

Celia gasped.

"Winifred," she exclaimed, "that is going too far. Whatever he is *not*, he is certainly not a mean hypocrite. You can't think that for—for any selfish or interested motives, he would *pretend* to care for you? He couldn't."

"No, no, I don't think him the least of a hypocrite," said Winifred, eagerly. "You don't understand, Celia. He *thinks* he does, quite honestly. He's always been put in the position, not told he *must* care for me, for of course with a man of any spirit or principle, that would only

drive him the other way. And Lennox has plenty of principle and spirit too, of a kind. But he has been tacitly told he *does*, and so he has come to believe it."

Celia looked extremely perplexed. This was a new light indeed upon the subject, but a light which seemed, at first at any rate, only to increase the already existing perplexity.

"If—if you think *that*," she said at last, "I don't wonder at what you always say about him. I mean about it all. Not that I don't sympathise with you—I do, as you know. I *couldn't* imagine being in love with Lennox," and she smiled to herself, as it were, at the very thought. "But I always thought it must make a great difference if a girl knows a man is very devoted to *her*, you know."

"Oh," said Winifred, in her very off-hand way, "as far as that goes, I *think* I could stand Lennox better if I knew he did not care much for me," which paradoxical speech gave her younger sister considerable food for reflection. And before Celia spoke again, Winifred dismissed the subject in her high-handed fashion, quite ignoring the fact that it was she herself and she alone who had started the conversation.

"You really must not chatter or let me chatter any more, Celia," she said. "I must get my letter written."

And for the best part of an hour there was no sound to be heard but the scratching of their pens—of Winifred's pen alone after a while, for Celia's correspondence was confined to her sister Louise, while Miss Maryon, once she had got her hand in, so to say, went on writing long after her rather short and not very graphic letter to her mother was finished. For she was a young woman of great energy and almost perfect physical condition. It was quite true, as she had declared to Mrs. Balderson, that she was not "the very least tired."

She looked up suddenly when she had closed and addressed her fourth envelope.

"It must be getting rather late," she said, "Shall I ring for our letters to be taken down, do you think, Celia? They are not in time for to-night's mail, but still if posted now they will get to Barleyfield for the afternoon delivery to-morrow."

But to her question there came no reply, and

looking up, the silence was quickly explained to her. Celia was fast asleep! Her pretty head supported by her arm, which had found a resting place on the end of a sofa standing by, she was far away in some happy dreamland probably, to judge by the half smile upon her face and the calm child-like softness of her breathing.

"Poor little Celia," said Winifred to herself. "How sweet she looks!" and with deft and gentle hand she moved the couch, so that the fair head itself could lean on the cushion. "Let me see," she went on, glancing at the clock on the mantelpiece, "a quarter—no, five minutes to seven, I will run down with the letters so as not to wake her by ringing, and then I will let her sleep till a quarter past. She will be all the brighter for it afterwards."

Bright, and better than bright—each, charming in her own way, looked the two girls an hour later, when they entered the drawing room again, where their hostess and her husband, a thin elderly man with pleasant luminous blue eyes, and grey hair rapidly turning to white, were having a consultation after the orthodox conjugal fashion as to "who takes whom" down to dinner.

"At my left, you say, my dear? Young Mrs. Fancourt at my left, oh yes, Lennox Maryon takes her. Why, I thought——" Mr. Balderson was saying, when the opening of the door made him stop abruptly, looking after the manner of men decidedly guilty, as an admonitory "sh," from his wife warned him that the new-comers were his young guests.

"That's right," said Mrs. Balderson, heartily. "Good girls. I like to have my home party about me on these little occasions. What can that lazy Eric be doing? He is not generally so late."

The delinquent entered as she spoke, before indeed the door had closed behind the two sisters. He came quietly into the room with some little laughing rejoinder to his mother, and walked over to where Mr. Balderson was standing, without seeming to notice either Winifred or Celia in any special way. Yet Celia was perfectly aware that even as he passed them he took in every detail of their appearance and attire.

"I hope he thinks we are nicely dressed," she thought, though she would not have liked Winifred to read her unspoken reflection. "I suspect he is

rather critical, though in a nice way. Well, Winifred looks very pretty I am sure, but I wish she were not quite so fond of black."

Yes—Winifred looked very well indeed, for though her black dress was almost severely simple it was of rich material and fitted well. This was in accordance with Miss Maryon's principles. She would have scorned to spend much time or thought upon her clothes, still, shabbiness or dowdiness or eccentricity she did not consider a fitting accompaniment of woman as she should be. The worst that could be said of her way of dressing was that it was far too old, and on the whole monotonous. But to strangers this latter defect was naturally absent, and perhaps the very heaviness and stiffness of style she affected had practically the opposite result of making the girl herself look all the younger.

However that may have been, she was genuinely indifferent about herself; to-night her thoughts were more on dress than usual nevertheless, for she was exceedingly interested in Celia's appearance, and, considering her theories, almost inconsistently eager that she should be admired.

"Does she not look lovely?" she could not help whispering to Mrs. Balderson, and her whole face sparkled with pleasure when there came the hearty reply.

"*Most* lovely—that pale pink suits her to perfection, and——" but the rest of the kind woman's admiration remained unexpressed, for at that moment some of her guests were announced, and she had to hasten forward to meet them. Others followed quickly, causing a little bustle in the room, under cover of which a young man made his way in quietly, not sorry to do so, if the truth were told, for Mr. Lennox Maryon, very much at home in the hunting field or at a steeple-chase, was decidedly shy in a London drawing-room. Nor was the consciousness of his cousin Winifred's observant, albeit short-sighted brown eyes, likely to put him more at his ease.

He was in luck however on the present occasion. Both Winifred and Celia were for the moment somewhat apart from the Baldersons and their other guests, feeling perhaps, as perfect strangers to the latter, just a little "out of it." Lennox hurried up to them with great satisfaction, though not without a touch of the nervousness which somehow always hovered about him when near Winifred.

"*How* are you?" he said with somewhat unnecessary emphasis, considering there was not the slightest need for anxiety as to the state of health of either of the girls. "So delighted to find you here. When did you come up? Left all well at home, eh?"

"One question at a time, please, Lennox, if you have no objection," said Winifred coldly. "Not that any of yours strike me as very important; we came up yesterday and we are both perfectly well, and as you saw everybody at home the day before, there is no reason for special anxiety about their health, that I can see."

Lennox gave a half awkward little laugh. What he was laughing at he could not have told, but he took it for granted that Winifred's speeches had something clever in them, and the laugh helped to hide his shyness. And he did not overhear Celia's reproachful tone as she whispered in her sister's ear:

"Winifred, how can you? Poor old Lennox."

"We are enjoying ourselves very much indeed, Lennox, you will be glad to hear," the younger girl said brightly. "I can scarcely believe we only left them all yesterday. It is delightful to see a home face again."

The young man turned to her gratefully, his handsome, rather sunburnt features lighting up with a very pleasant smile.

"Good little Celia," he said approvingly. "I don't believe there's much fear of *your* falling in love with London."

There was a little bitterness underlying the accent he put on the pronoun. Winifred heard it, and was ready for battle on the spot.

"Celia is absurd," she exclaimed. "She is only talking that kind of way to please you, Lennox. Why, the very first thing she said this morning was 'oh, Winifred, if only we were to be here three months instead of three weeks!' You know it was, Celia."

"And no harm in it, that I can see, if she did say so," said Lennox, flushing a little. "I think London's very good fun, myself, once in a way."

He could pluck up a spirit now and then, with Winifred, but I scarcely think it profited him much.

"Very good fun," she repeated. "You do express yourself so oddly, Lennox. I am afraid our ideas on the subject of London are not more likely to agree than on——"



But a touch on her arm stopped her. Celia was drawing her attention to the fact that Mr. Balderson was on the point of introducing a man to her. An elderly, or at least middle-aged, man, whose name was known to her as that of a distinguished-in-his-own-line writer.

"Mr. Sunningdale—Miss Maryon."

The middle-aged man bowed, somewhat absently. He dined out most nights of his life; he only saw a young woman in black, whom he did not remember ever having seen before, and he had been interrupted in a conversation, at the other side of the room, with a woman he knew well, whose conversation always amused him. These little *contre-temps* will happen in the best-regulated houses. He was not an ill-tempered man, and resigned himself to fate. But Winifred's face, on the contrary, changed from steely coldness to sunshine. You would scarcely have recognised her for the same girl, as she replied to some little commonplace observation of the great man's with her most winning manner.

"Good eyes," thought he to himself, "I hope I shall not need to talk to her much," while Winifred, in a flutter of gratification, was saying to herself how very kind it was of Mrs. Balderson to have given her to Mr. Sunningdale, of all people, to take her in to dinner.

Lennox moved away with a little sigh, which Celia heard, though it was all but inaudible. The girl's tender heart quivered for him, for she was far from endorsing her elder sister's startling suggestion: that Lennox did not really "care for her."

"He is just devoted to her—quite devoted," thought Celia. "How unlucky it seems. These things generally go that way, I suppose; at least, if what one reads in novels is true. I hope I shall never care for anyone, and that no one will care for me, for it would be sure to be only on one side or the other."

She had no time to say anything consoling or sympathising to her cousin—indeed, what could

she have said?—for he was already told off to his lady, the young Mrs. Fancourt, whom Mr. Balderson had alluded to; and Celia herself was soon appropriated by the husband of the pretty little woman in question, on whose arm she made her way downstairs.

She had scarcely looked at him; she was thinking so much of Winifred and Lennox, that she was quite indifferent about her own fate, and Mr. Fancourt, a good-natured man, whose rather limited ideas were entirely absorbed by admiration for his wife, soon gave her up as decidedly dull and heavy. Celia did not care—she had plenty to think of and plenty to amuse herself with; she was rather glad when her monosyllables resulted in Mr. Fancourt's directing his attentions to the woman on his other side. And one or two courses had been removed before a voice on her right hand startled her into realising that she had a neighbour in that quarter too.

"Miss Maryon, what are you thinking about so intently?" were the words she heard. "I have been watching you for quite five minutes—you are in a regular brown study."

Celia started, then smiled, and finally, as she became satisfied that Eric—for it was he—was not really shocked at her, could not repress a little laugh.

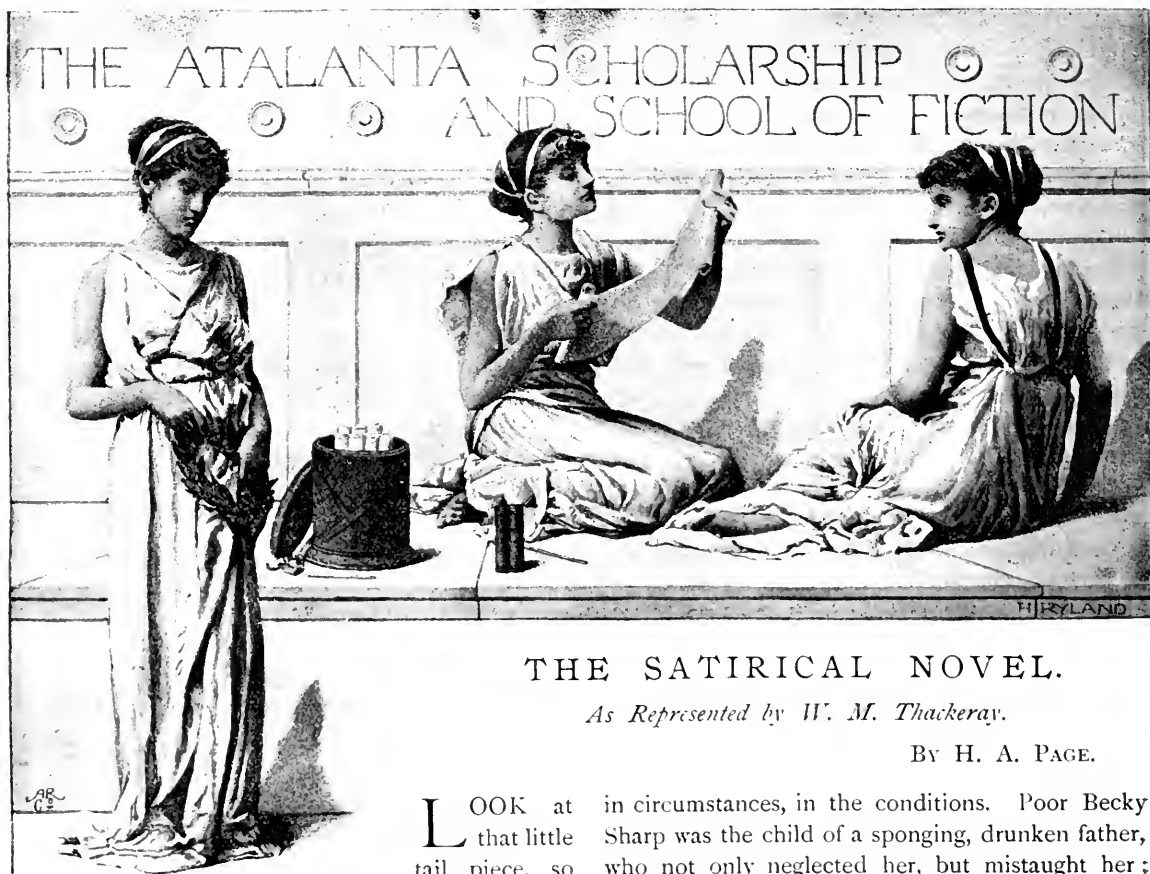
"I am so sorry," she said. "Why didn't you speak to me before? I didn't even know you were there."

"So I saw—at least, I hoped it was so—that there was no special motive in the resolute way in which you turned a cold shoulder upon me, and"—

"No," said Celia, laughing again, "my shoulders are not at all cold, thank you. This part of the room is delightfully out of any draught."

"And," continued Eric, "fixed your eyes upon the flowers in front of you and let your thoughts wander to—no! that I can't guess. I wonder where they were wandering to?"

(To be continued.)



## THE SATIRICAL NOVEL.

*As Represented by W. M. Thackeray.*

BY H. A. PAGE.

LOOK at that little tail piece, so quaint, yet so real, at the end of the 8th chapter of "Vanity Fair." There you have a fancy portrait of Thackeray, not at all unlike—short nose, with spectacles on it, keen eye, but with chubby cheeks and childlike innocent look, the limbs those of a very child, the mask held in the hand, and the stick with head of a punch on the end of it, instead of the bladder and the peas, which was once in use by motley. In this device, in our idea, Thackeray has very aptly and naïvely indicated the character of his art. He is the satirist, but he often wore the mask. Along with his humour, his keen outlook on life, his penetrating glance into motives, his caustic pictures of the seamy side of character and life, there is yet a fine tenderness and reverence for all that is sweet and actively graceful in character and conduct. He uses his satire to give fuller effect to what he loves, and would fain commend to us. He writes for warning, for reproof, for correction, but also for instruction in righteousness. Even in his most repellant portraits, he never fails to present to us some little hint of excuse in blood,

in circumstances, in the conditions. Poor Becky Sharp was the child of a sponging, drunken father, who not only neglected her, but mistaught her; and from the first she learned the creed of distrusting others and of looking out for herself. She had no mother, nor had she any *childhood*; it is as though Thackeray said in meaning commentary, "See what comes of the want of a good mother and the presence of a bad father; my Becky but justifies the power of influences in childhood; therefore be jealous to surround your young people as far as you can with benignant influences and lessons." The hulking, half-stupid lifeguardsman, Rawdon Crawley, whom Becky marries but cannot help feeling a little contempt for, gains something of her affection and admiration when he shows such spirit in his castigation of the old roué, Lord Steyne, in that most dramatic of all the scenes of this kind which Thackeray has painted. It is indeed only the self-seeking Bute Crawley, the clergyman intent on securing Miss Crawley's money, who is presented to us with little or no redeeming feature. And constantly there is the true woman flitting about on her messages of love and mercy: Lady Jane, Amelia Osborn, Laura Pendennis, Ethel Newcome. He has his noble

types of men too, as in Dobbin and Warrington and Colonel Newcome; and though it has been said that he is apt to overdo goodness and make his good men weak, this is but a superficial criticism. Their influence, at all events, he makes the salt of his story.

Thackeray therefore cannot be said to present the dark side of life and character *on its own account*. He has no liking for that phase, though he cannot close his eyes to the fact of its existence. No, he is intent on showing the better side—the better way—and in some degree the lack of the ordinary elements of plot, and the development of the common love story is due to this. He is not in favour of high lights, but he has his own way of finding the relief he needs. The power—the obtaining power of maternal affection, of sisterly devotion—is constantly present with him, and he uses these skilfully to give effect to the whole. Who that has once read it could ever forget that chapter in “Esmond” where Harry, long misunderstood by Lady Esmond because misled as to the real part he had taken in the mournful incident that led to the death of her husband, at last awakens to the real facts: and when she meets Harry blesses him. “I think the angels are not all in heaven,” said Mr. Esmond. And as a brother folds a sister to his heart, and as a mother cleaves to her son’s breast, so for a few moments Esmond’s beloved mistress came to him and blessed him.”

Earlier in the story occurs a very significant passage which throws a good deal of light on Thackeray’s notion of satire, and indirectly on his method, if it is well considered. This passage is so suggestive and significant that we must crave leave to transcribe it here:—

“If my lady did not speak of her griefs to Harry Esmond, my lord was by no means reserved when in his cups, bidding Harry, in his coarse way, and with his blunt language, beware of all women as cheats, jades, jilts, and using other unmistakable monosyllables in speaking of them. Indeed, ’twas the fashion of the day, as I must own; and there’s not a writer of my time of any note, with the exception of poor Dick Steele, that does not speak of a woman as of a slave, and scorn and use her as such. Mr. Pope, Mr. Congreve, Mr. Addison, Mr. Gay, every one of ’em, sing in this key, each according to his nature and politeness; and louder

and fouler than all in abuse is Doctor Swift, who spoke of them, as he treated them, worst of all. Much of the quarrels and hatred which arise between married people come, in my mind, from the husband’s rage and revolt at discovering that his slave and bed-fellow, who is to minister to all his wishes, and is church-sworn to honour and obey him, is his superior; and that *he*, not she, ought to be the subordinate of the twain; and in these controversies, I think, lay the cause of my lord’s anger against his lady.”

We here find the reason why Thackeray, though he puts on the mask of the satirist, and plays with the jester’s stick, is yet, in essentials, a sentimentalist in the best meaning of that much-abused word. He is concerned to picture Vanity Fair as he finds it, but has yet more concern to lose no trace of the divine angel of goodness that, unseen, hovers over it, and sends messengers to do deeds of mercy and kindness that are not so easily observed or recorded. Were it not for this, indeed, the Fair would soon come to an end, the denizens of it would eat each other up, as wild animals would do. Life would not be worth living were it not for the serene air which surrounds the select souls, who, with no pretence, show by their sweet spirit that there’s a divinity doth shape the ends of life, despite the greed, the selfishness, the vanity of it which thrust themselves first before the eyes of the observer.

It is because Thackeray was so intent on this that with him the conventional interests of the novelist were subsidiary. He is bold enough to write “A Novel without a Hero:” he sets half-a-dozen couples a love-making, but does not carry on any one of them in the manner the ordinary novelist would do: nay, in “Lovel, the Widower,” he sets aside the most conventional and obtaining rules in this regard.

A realist up to a certain point Thackeray undoubtedly is, but no further. He will faithfully paint men and women as he sees them; but he insists on his right, in the last resort, also to create. The silver thread of unaffected self-denial and the sense of satisfaction in a good deed done, and in action accordant with the highest impulse and bidding of the heart, as exhibited in typical characters in all his novels, combine to raise them to a different level altogether from the writings of such men as Swift. There is with Thackeray no

kind of sense as of "having his pleasure in it too," when he paints evil—a sense which Goethe shrewdly attributes to Mephisto, and insists on as his main characteristic—a sense with which it must be admitted that Swift and some others of our great satirists, show themselves only too much infected. Satire that is without its benignant and benevolent check partakes too much, surely, of the Mephisto character, and is not to be commended—more especially to the young.

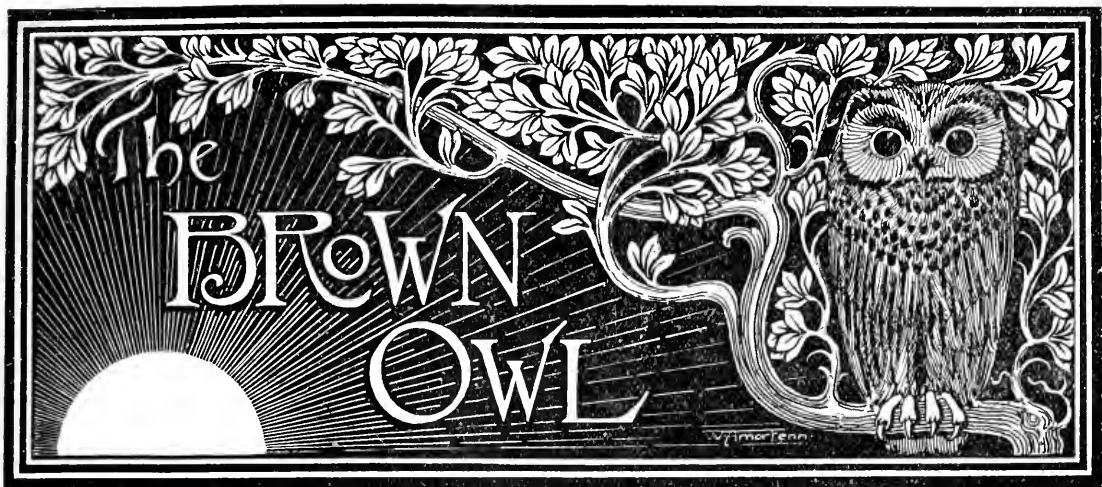
Thackeray does not affect sensational incident and situation, and yet he can very naturally lead up to most effective episodes. One of the most masterly pieces in its own kind, to our thinking, is the scene between Sir Pitt and Rawdon Crawley, just after the assault upon Lord Steyne; and effect is still further gained by some of the humorous touches in the scene that follows between Rawdon and Captain McMurdo. His power in using humorous elements to brighten his effects, and gain verisimilitude, is seen in his whole treatment of Captain Costigan and his daughter, always intermingled with touches of true pathos and pathetic reminiscence—striking instances of which are found in that chapter of "The Newcomes" describing the death of Colonel Newcome—most of them are as sincere and prevailing as is that wonderful clause in the Bouillabaisse ballad, winding up with—"There's no one now to share my cup." The true satirist should also be a true humourist and master of pathos, as Thackeray undoubtedly was.

Two warnings may be drawn from Thackeray's method, both of them very practical. First, beware of the picturesque in every form, even of nature-description, where it might seem to come in fitly. Thackeray is most cautious in this respect. He knows well how much any tendency this way would weaken his effect, which is gained entirely by attention to the subtle results of character upon character, either in developing latent tendencies or in repressing others, with no aside or introduction of alien interest. For his purpose this was most essential.

Again, he is not given to admire idols: and it may be that even with his good people he was fain

to show in them just a suggestion of perversity or weakness lest he should be charged with "invention" and "make-believe," of which he cherished the most abiding horror. His satire is thus studiously tempered by belief in goodness. He does not indulge it for its own sake, but rather to point a sublimer moral, to adorn a loftier tale. When he devoted himself to the presentation of a past period, his methods remained the same. He was intent on showing how the good elements in it overbore the evil, acting as the salt whose savour was not lost. In "The Virginians," as in the fine fragment, "Denis Duval," the last of his gifts to us, this was the case; and he had the art to make the past live before us, though he sought little or no aid from the kind of sensational, incident and picturesque situation in which historic romancers have most loved to indulge. He made himself free of home and heart, and chose to be domestic and unaffectedly familiar, and thus gave us the place and the period in their very heart and habit.

If any of our readers should be tempted to essay the satirical novel, let them learn from Thackeray that satire, to be efficient and human, cannot justify itself through mere cynicism or ill-nature, however clever and sustained. To be true and vital, it must look beyond itself; that the salt which alone can keep it alive is, after all, benevolent and genial relief—on this, and this alone, can the true creative impulse found itself and find justification: without this, satire is but a *caput mortuum*—and a satirical novel of this kind, like nothing so much as a barren twig stuck in the ground with a few gum-flowers round about the top of it. It is Thackeray's pre-eminence that he has shown how satire can be elevated and humanised by being associated with genial and sympathetic impulse. If you get men and women to laugh genially at themselves or others, you have unconsciously widened their horizons; if you have merely confirmed them in dislike and sardonic scorn, you have narrowed them; and for such work no man ought to thank you. For it is ever true, as Carlyle was wont to say, though he did not always fully act up to his own axiom, "Contempt is a dangerous element to sport in."



## THINGS IN GENERAL.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

I HAVE lately been reading, in a remarkable book newly published, the story of *Marcella*, which everybody in England is reading and discussing—with much reason for both—statements about the villagers, the ordinary rustic community, the merry ploughboys and merry milkmaids of literature a century ago, which are very confusing and troublous—descriptions of their miserable looks, their emaciated frames, the paleness of the women and children, the deterioration of the race. The accomplished writer of that book has studied the question, as she does all the subjects on which she writes, I believe, with the profoundest attention, and ought to know. But the description has upon me a startling effect. Is it so? I do not seem to recognize the country folk whom I know in these lines. Even the children in the London slums look better than the village children, Mrs. Ward says: which is consequent upon bad cottages, bad water, bad drainage, and general neglect. I am not prepared categorically to contradict these statements, not having closely studied the subject, but they do not agree with my own much lighter and more casual observations. I wonder what the reader will say? Are there no longer any rosy faces—any radiance of health—among the English villagers? It is a sad thing to say—but is it true? It seems to me that when the rustic school comes pouring out, the noisy glee, the mischief, the tricks, the thumping feet and

shouting voices, are as vigorous as heart could desire, and that the fathers and mothers do not in general look much amiss. But there—I have not gone deeply into the question, and I may be mistaken.

Nothing is more extraordinary, indeed, it appears to me, than the wonderful looks of the poor people who are exposed to so many privations, and who, so far as we can see, have nothing at all to make life pleasant to them. Even in the London slums they are wonderful. I had the pleasure once of taking tea with a number of women and children of the very poorest class, in Chelsea, on the borders of one of the worst districts. It was what may be called a private tea-party, not a school treat or anything of a public kind. Some of the women had made a little attempt at finery in honour of the great occasion, and this imparted to those who had indulged in it something of a squalid air. But those who had not given way to the vanity of a lace collar were so amazingly, so bewilderingly like other people, that the little vulgar curiosity one had to see what manner of creatures they were was quenched in shame. And the children—those little creatures who play in the gutter, who live in crowded rooms, in noisome streets, in all the filth and misery that the most philanthropic imagination could conceive—the children, or at least many of them, were beautiful! How to account for this I do not

know—but that it was so was certain. Nor, I think, when you walk through these deplorable places do you find the debased, the diseased, the pinched and wan and miserable looks which you would expect to find, and which Marcella Boyce found in her village, somewhere near the Chilterns. There must be many who are ill and weakly—there are, Heaven knows, in the most carefully-guarded homes—but they do not affect the general aspect of the population. Diet, I am sorry to say, does not affect it. I am so old-fashioned as to entertain a doubt whether even drainage does. The other day (not under English skies) I had to drive along a road infested with tanks of decaying matter from the factories where acres of delicious violets and roses are made into perfumes that scent the world. Even roses and violets leave, alas! relics that smell as bad and are as deleterious (I suppose) as anything else that is corrupt and decayed. We who passed by held handkerchiefs to our noses, and felt that every breath of air brought nausea on its wings. But in the midst of these streams and reservoirs of horror there were houses—there was even one certain village—full of a healthy, ruddy population, solid men and women, sturdy children, models in their way of strength and rustic vigour. And how these people continue, at all risks, to retain such health, such robust flesh and bone and sinew, it is hard to tell. They do everything they ought not to do in the sanitary way. In a country where almost every village is a delightfully picturesque little town, beautiful to behold, but with narrow streets, utterly ignorant of drainage, and narrow houses piled upon each other, it would be only logical to believe—I had almost said hope—that everybody would have fever, and that pestilence would be the most permanent inhabitant. But it is not so. It is true that, as the eye sees what it looks for, a gloomy observer might remark upon the number of persons who suffer from toothache and who, frankly indifferent to appearance, tie up their faces in handkerchiefs, who are to be seen about. But toothache is not deadly. The air is excellent: it is balmy and life-giving in this corner of Provence; but the natives shut it carefully out of their houses. Perhaps it may be a wise precaution to keep the windows and the shutters, the green *persiani*, which are universal here, closed against it in the narrow little streets. But the country

houses, planted amid the fields and olive grounds in the freshest and purest air, are exactly the same. The people are as much afraid of the sun indoors as they are careless of any shade without. The woman who will walk out into the noon-day blaze with nothing to protect her head, carefully shuts up her house from every invasion of the light. There is nothing to breathe but mustiness when you go into one of her rooms. You feel that you must fling the window open or die. But she takes no harm. This is a mystery. I have never known how to account for it. It is discouraging to those who hope in time, by sanitary improvements, to chase sickness away out of the world. It would indeed, be a great deal better for theory if these ruddy Provençals were like Mrs. Ward's English villagers—emaciated and pale.

It is astonishing, however, how completely it is what the eye looks for that it sees. I know a great many people who have nothing to remark upon but the dirt of the streets, or the number of beggars, or the extortionate price demanded for some local curiosity when they go through, let us say, a lovely old Italian town, full of wonders. An excellent friend of mine says when she hears talk of Venice, "Ah! but the water! Those wells are full of abominations, and then the smells!" That is all he can remember. I suppose it was all he was conscious of in that city of delights. And there are a great many much more highly cultured and refined persons who cannot see Venice at all for the iron bridge which shocks them, and the little steamboat which rouses every noble feeling of indignation in their bosoms. And yet Venice, notwithstanding iron bridges and steamboats, is one of those cities of which it may still be said, as of Jerusalem, that she is the joy of the whole earth. What, those noble houses made of pearl and gold, breathing out light at every line between the blue sky and the blue sea—those windings where every turn brings you face to face with a new combination of bewildering palaces and towers: and that grandest sweep of highway, with the golden water under your keel, with all the freedom of the sea in it, and the musical rustle of the oar, instead of rattling wheels and clouds of dust, carry you on from end to end—the wells and the smells! Some people know no more.

I am not to be supposed to deny that there are smells in Venice, or that the most picturesque

wells in the world may be a little muddy. But there are smells in my own little town at home, notwithstanding that the plumber is the man most highly esteemed among us, and who makes the most money: and the water is not much to brag of, if truth were told. These drawbacks, like the poor, we have always with us—indeed, I think that the more we labour to extirpate them, the more conscious do we become of their presence—perhaps even the more susceptible to their evil influence. At all events it is a standing mystery how those who defy every rule and law of Hygiene—the goddess of our English day—and who ought in consequence to suffer every penalty—don't! and don't look like it either, so far as my experience goes. This is a mystery, and there are very few things in the world that are not so. It would suit our modern theories a great deal better if human creatures were not so contradictory, and if the people in the cottages would really consent to look always thin and pale.

I suppose nothing is more impossible to human nature than to look upon the world with candid eyes and see only what is to be seen. It takes a great effort of magnanimity not to see what we look for, or even to see anything else by the side of what we look for; while in most cases only the progress of time and a trifle of inherent honesty underneath the *parti pris*, which most average people

have, if they will give themselves time—enable us to take a just view. I have heard many excellent persons, for instance, and people who had little affinity with the brutality of the old No-popery days, denouncing broadly and indignantly as mummery all the religious services and worship of the Church of Rome which, to three parts, I suppose, of Christendom are still, whatever rebellions may be in the blood or in the fancy, the way of life. And there is nothing so common in literature or in talk as denunciation of Calvinism as a creed in which damnation is the first feature, and nothing else is of much importance. Ridiculous mummery on the one hand, the most cruel superstition on the other, and yet many of the noblest of human characters have taken their inspiration from one or other of these so easily-disposed-of methods of the great universal faith. For the last, indeed, I wonder at my own temerity in venturing to say a word in defence of any system so universally condemned, and which every little young budding novelist of twenty knows to be at the bottom of half the evil that has been done in the modern world. But this is not, perhaps, the place for the discussion of such grave subjects. And, in fact, all that I meant to speak of was the tendency of the mind, nay, to put it more strongly, of the eye, to see only or chiefly what it expects and intends to see.



## ATALANTA SCHOLARSHIP AND READING UNION.

Describe an Episode between Two Lovers, in which a proposal of marriage takes place    Reply-  
Papers must be sent in by the 25th of the month, and must not exceed 500 words.

## SEARCH QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

### I.

In what works are the following characters found?—  
*Philario, Dr. Butts, Violenta, Borachio, Gonzalo.*

### II.

1. What are referred to in the following quotations?

In shoals the hours their constant numbers bring,  
Like insects waking to th' advancing spring.

Amazing race! deprived of land and laws,  
A general language and a public cause.

2. Give author and names of poems.

### III.

1. Where occur these lines?—

——— Like south wind through a fence  
Of Kerzrah flowers, came fill'd with pestilence

2. To what superstition do they refer?

### IV.

Give names of poems, and their authors, from which these verses are taken—

Howbeit, their wailings never moved

The wide Satanic clan,

Who grinned, as once the Devil grinned,

To see the fall of Man.

So she kissed him and whispered—poor innocent thing—  
“The next time you come, love, pray come with a ring.”

### V.

1. Fill in the name of the author to whom this paragraph refers—

“Of ——, however, as of almost every man who has been distinguished, either in the literary or the political world, it may be said that the course which he pursued, and the effect which he produced, depended less on his personal qualities than on the circumstances in which he was placed.”

2. By whom is it written?

### VI.

In what poem are the following characters found?—  
*Belinda, Clarissa, Sir Plume, Dapperwit.*

### VII.

Who wrote the following sonnets?—*The Day is Gone, Youth and Nature, Montenegro, A Superscription.*

### VIII.

1. Who wrote an epitaph on his wife during her life, and had it hung over the chimney piece “in an elegant frame?”

2. What purposes did he mean it to serve?

## ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (APRIL).

### I.

1. *The Bird's Release*, by Mrs. Hemans. 2. The East Indian custom of bringing caged birds to the graves of their friends and setting them free there. 3. At the funeral of Virginia (*Paul and Virginia*).

### II.

1. The sons of Burns. 2. Wordsworth.

### III.

1. Beatrice. 2. *The Cenci*, by Shelley.

### IV.

1. *Charity*, by Cowper. 2. Cortez, Montezuma, Philip II. 3. The events occurred in the reign of Charles V.

### V.

1. The Bishops of Salisbury, Chichester, and London. 2. Pope's *Dunciad*.

### VI.

1. Gernutus, the Jew of Venice. 2. *Pecorone*.

### VII.

1. Puck. 2. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

### VIII.

*Maud and Enoch Arden.*







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Paul Thumann.

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## “Dimidium Facti.”

By R. D. BLACKMORE.

“Oh, fie! The sad thing I  
have heard!

A most distressing rumour,  
Just brought me by a little bird,  
Has ruined my good humour—  
An act I cannot bear to name,  
And in a place secluded!  
Oh, Polly, I should die  
with shame,  
To do the thing that you did!”

“Aunt, can you mean that  
stupid tale

About my cousin Charley,  
Because the poor boy looked  
so pale,

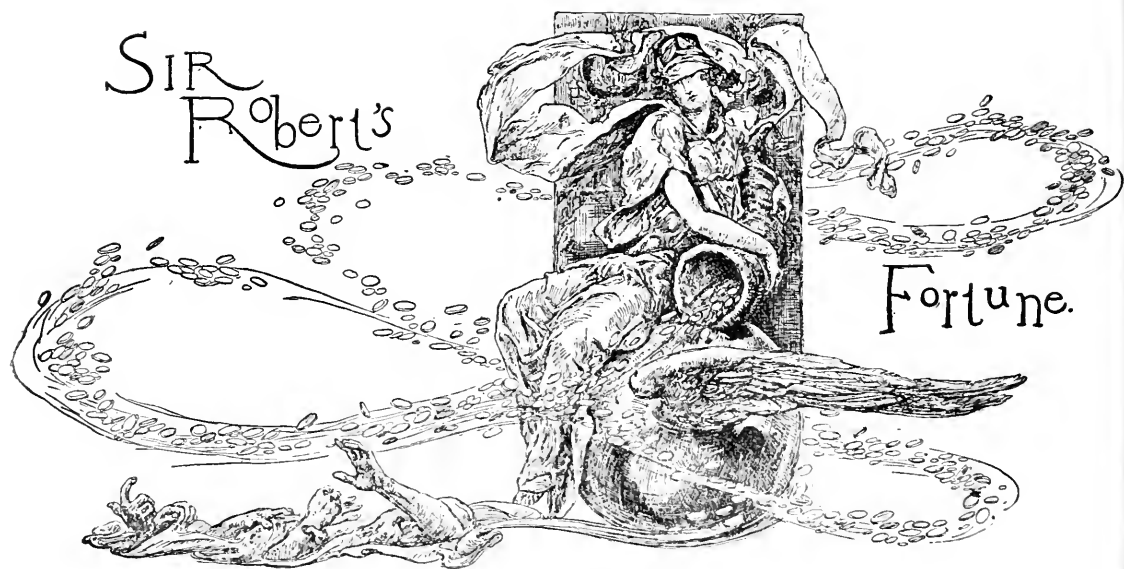
When I met him in the barley?

What happened there was strictly this—

So let them make the best of it—

I gave him less than half a kiss;

And he gave me the rest of it.”



BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SIR ROBERT arrived, as they had been warned, next day. An express came in the morning, preceding him, to order rooms to be prepared for three guests—to the great indignation of Katrin, who demanded where she was expected to get provender for four men and maybe men-servants into the bargain, that were worse than their masters, at a moment's notice. "As if there was naething to do but put linen on the beds," she cried. "The auld man must have gaun gyte. Ye canna make a dinner for Sir Robert and his gentlemen out of a chuckie and a brace o' birds frae the moor. If I had but a hare to make soup o', or a wheen trout, or a single blessed thing. You'll just put the black powny in the cart, Dougal, and ye'll gang down yoursel' to the toun. Sandy! What does Sandy ken? How could I trust that callant to look after Sir Robert's denner? You're nane so clever yoursel'—but it's you that shall go and no another. Man, have ye no thought of your auld maister and his first dinner when the auld man comes home?"

"I think of him maybe mair than some folk that have keepit grand goings on in his auld hoose."

"*What* were ye saying?" cried Katrin, fixing him with a commanding eye. She pronounced this, as I have gently insinuated before, "F'what," which gave great force to the sound. "I might have kent," she cried, with a toss of her head, "there wasna a man breathing that could hold his tongue when he thought he had a story to tell."

"Me—tell a story!" said Dougal, in instinctive self-defence. Then he added: "It a' depends—on what a man has to tell."

"Ye're born traitors, a' the race o' ye, from Adam down," cried Katrin, in her wrath, "and aye the women to bear the wyte, accordin' to you. Tell till ye burst!" she exclaimed, with concentrated fury, "and it's no me'll say a word: but put the powny in the cart and gang down to the town, and try what ye can get for *my* denner. I'll no have the auld man starved, no, nor yet shamed afore his freends, nor served with an ill denner the first night—him that hasna been in his ain auld house for years."

"Ye're awfu' particular about his denner, considering everything that's come and gone, and the care you've taen of him and his."

"Yes!" cried Katrin, "I'm awfu' particular about his denner. Are you going? or will I have

to leave the rooms to settle themselves and go myself?"

Dougal at last obeyed this strong impulsion—but the black powny and the cart were not for so important a person as Sir Robert's factotum the day his master came home. He put Rory into the geeg, and drove down in such state as was procured by these means, with his countenance full of unutterable things. He was indeed, when the little quarrel with Katrin was over, a man laden with much thought. Dougal had observed not very clearly, but yet more than he was believed to have observed. His stolid understanding had been played upon unmercifully by the women, and he had been taken in many times in respect to Ronald's presence or absence in the house. Often it had occurred that he "could have sworn" the visitor was there when he was not there, and still oftener he could have sworn the reverse—but at the end of all the tricks and deceptions he was tolerably clear as to the position of affairs, if he had possessed the faculty of speech, and sufficient indifference to other motives to have used it. But Dougal, who was a very simple soul, was held in the grasp of as great a complication of influences as if he had been the most subtle and the most self-analyzing. Should he tell Sir Robert what he had seen and guessed? Sir Robert was his master, and it was Dougal's duty, as guardian of the house, to report what had occurred in it. Ay! but would he shame the house by raising a story that maybe never would be got at by the right end—for what could he say? That a gentleman from Edinburgh had been about the place, coming and going by night and by day: that a person could never tell when he was there and when he wasna there—and finally, that it was clear as daylight, him and Miss Lily were "great freends." Ah, Miss Lily! that brought up again another series of motives. She was his, Dougal's, young leddy, by every lawful tie, the only bairn of the house, the real heir. If Sir Robert, as he was perfectly capable, were to leave Dalrugas away from her the morn, she would not a whit the less be the only Ramsay left of the old family, Mr. James's daughter, who had been Dougal's adoration in his youth. Was he to raise a scandal on Miss Lily—he, her own father's man? Dougal's heart revolted at the thought. And Katrin that spoiled the lassie, that could see

nothing that was not perfect in her! Katrin would never have a good word for her man again. She would call him a traitor—that word that burns and never ceases to wound, like black Monteith that betrayed the Wallace wight, like—But Dougal's courage was not equal to that anticipation: rather anything than that—rather flee the country than that—to betray a bit creature that trusted him, Mr. James's daughter, the last Ramsay, a little lass that could not fight for herself. "No me!" cried Dougal, to all the winds that blew. "No me!" he said, confronting old Schiehallion, as if that tranquil mountain had tempted him. He shook his fist at the hills and at the world. "No me, no me!" he said.

I do not believe that Katrin ever was in the least afraid in respect to Dougal: but a very troubled woman was Katrin that day. She had been in Ronald Lumsden's confidence all along, more than his wife knew, and in her way had abetted him and helped him, though often against her conscience. Beenie had done the same, but she had not Katrin's head, and meekly followed where the other led. They had both been partially guilty in respect to Marg'ret, a woman introduced into the house by the clumsiest means, which Lily could have seen through in a moment had she tried, but whose presence was so great a comfort and relief to the other two that their eagerness to accede to the artifice by which she was brought as a guest to Dalrugas was very excusable. "What would you and me do, Beenie?" Katrin had said, for once acknowledging a situation with which she was not able to cope. They had been able "to sleep at night," as they both said, since *that* woman was there, and there was nothing to be said against the woman. She was not troublesome, she was kind, she knew what she was about. That she was Ronald's emissary was nothing against her. She was, on the contrary, an evidence of the husband's tender care for his wife—his anxiety that she should have the best and most constant attention—"And a bonnie penny she will cost him," the two women said to themselves. But the events of the last twenty-four hours had altogether overwhelmed Katrin: and she had not the comfort even of speaking to anyone on the subject, of expressing her horror, her amazement and dismay, for Beenie was shut up with Lily, whose state was such that

she could not be left alone for a moment. It was well for the housekeeper that her head was filled with Sir Robert's dinner and the airing of the mattresses. It gave her a relief from her heavy thoughts to drag down the feather beds and turn them over and over before a blazing fire, though it was August, and the sun blazing hot out of doors. She worked—as a Highland housekeeper works the day the gentlemen are to arrive—for the credit of the house and her own. "Would I let strangers find a word to say, or a thing forgotten, and me the woman in charge of Dalrugas this mony and mony a year!" she said to herself. And it did Katrin a great deal of good, as she did not hesitate to acknowledge. It took off her thoughts.

Sir Robert arrived in the evening with two elderly friends and one young one, with all their guns and paraphernalia, Sir Robert's own man directing everything, and at least one other manservant, bringing dismay to Katrin's heart. "You will not have more than two or three good days on my little bit of moor," the old gentleman had said, with proud humility, "but the neighbours are very friendly, and no doubt my niece has got a lot of cheerful Highland lassies about her, that will enliven the time for you, my young friend." The friends, young and old, had protested their perfect prospective satisfaction with the entertainment Sir Robert had to offer, none of them believing, as indeed he did not believe himself, his own disparaging account of the moor. They arrived very dusty in their post-chaise, but in high spirits, the old gentleman with an excited pleasure in returning to the old house of his fathers, which he had not seen for years. Perhaps it looked to him small and gray and chill, as is the wont of old paternal houses when a long-absent master comes back. He called out almost as soon as he came in sight of the door, where Dougal was waiting with his bonnet poised on the extreme edge of his head, on one hair, and Sandy behind him, ready with awe to follow the directions of the gentleman's gentlemen, and carry the luggage upstairs. "Where is Miss Lily? Where is my niece?" Sir Robert cried. "Does she not think it worth her trouble to come and meet her old uncle at the door?"

Katrin came forth from the threshold, within which she had been lurking, and curtsied to the

best of her ability. "You're welcome, Sir Robert, you're awfu' welcome," she said, "but Miss Lily, I'm sorry to say, is just very ill in her bed."

"Ill in her bed!" cried Sir Robert. "Nonsense! Nonsense! I know that kind of illness. She is vexed at me for sending her here, and she's made up her mind to sulk a little that I may flatter her and plead with her. You may tell her it won't do. I'm not that kind of man. I'll pardon maybe a bonnie lass in all her braws and showing her pleasure in them, but a sulky, sour young woman—Eh, Evandale, what were you saying—an old house—it's old enough if ye think that to its credit, and bare enough. Katrin, I hope you'll be able to make these gentlemen comfortable in the old barrack, such as it is."

"I hope so, Sir Robert," said Katrin. She was relieved that his animadversions on Lily should be cut short.

And then they mounted the spiral staircase with the worn steps, which in one or two places were almost dangerous, and which the elder men mounted very cautiously, one after the other, the loud footsteps of the men echoing through the place, their deeper voices filling the air. "Lord bless us all!" Katrin cried within herself, "if they had arrived ten days ago!" It was a comfort, in the midst of all the trouble, that Lily was safe in her bed, and whatever happened, could not be disturbed.

Sir Robert's inquiries again next morning after his niece were made late and after long delay. It was the twelfth of August, and unnecessary to say that Dalrugas was full of sound and hurry from an early hour: the manufacture and consumption of an enormous breakfast, and the preparations for the first great day with the grouse occupying everybody, so that Katrin herself, though very anxious, had not found a moment to visit Lily's room, or even to snatch a moment's talk with Beenie over her mistress's state. "Just the same: and that's very bad," Beenie said, through the half-open door, "and just half out of her wits with the noise, and no able to understand what it means." "Oh, it's a' thae men," cried Katrin. "The gentlemen and their grouse, and the others with the guns and the dogues and a' the rest o't. Pity me that have not a moment, that must gang and toil for them and their breakfasts." When everything was ready at last, and the party set out, Sir Robert, whose

shooting days were over, accompanied them to a certain favourite corner upon Rory, who, though the old gentleman was not a heavy weight, objected to the unusual length of his limbs and decision of his proceedings: but he returned to the house shortly after, musing, with a sigh or two. Perhaps it was a rash experiment to come back after so many years: his doctor had advised it strongly, giving him much hope from his native air, the air of the moors and hills—and from the quiet and regular hours, and rule of measured living, which he would have no temptation to transgress. “We must remember we are not so young as we once were—any of us,” the physician had said, notwithstanding that he himself was but forty. When a man is old and ailing, and lives too perilously well, and sees and does too much in the gayer regions of the land, and is known at the same time to have a castle in the North—an old patrimony in the Highlands, delightful in August at least, and probably the best place in the world for him at all times of the year—such a prescription is easy. “Your native air, Sir Robert, and a quiet country life.” The twelfth of August, a fine day, and already the sharp, clear report of the guns in the brilliant air, and a sense of company and enjoyment about, and the moor a great magnificent garden, purple with heather, is about as cheerful a moment as could be chosen to make a beginning of such a life. But old Sir Robert, returning from the beginning of the sport which he was not able to share, to his old house, his Highland castle, which, as he turned towards it, in the glorious sunshine of the morning, looked so gray and pinched and penurious, with the tower that was only a high outstanding gable, and the farm buildings which had for so long a time been the chief and most important points of the cluster of buildings to its humble occupants—had little to make him cheerful. A sharp sensation, almost of shame, stung the old man as he realised what his friends must have thought of his Highland castle. Taymouth and Inverary are castles, and so are the bran-new houses down the Clyde, in which the Glasgow merchants establish themselves with all the luxuries which money can buy. But where did old Dalrugas come in, so spare and poor, rising straight out of the moor, without garden or pleasance, not to speak of parks or woods? He smiled to himself a little sadly at

the misnomer. He was wounded in the pride with which he had regarded that shrunken, impoverished little place—a pride which he felt now was half ludicrous and yet half pathetic. How was it that he had not thought so when last he was here, then a mature man, and having passed all the glamour of youth? He shook his head at the pinched, tall gable, the corbie steps cut so clearly against the blue sky, the gray line of the bare, blank wall. After all it was but a poor house for a family with such pretensions as the Ramsays of Dalrugas—a poor thing to brag to his Southern friends about. And it was not very gay: he who had been a man who loved to enjoy himself, and who had done so wherever he had been, to come back here in the end of his days to settle down to the dreariness of the solitary moor and the silence of a country life. Was it not a discipline more than he could bear that “those doctors” had put him under? Was a year or two more of vegetation here worth the giving up of all his old gratifications and amusements? It is hard even upon a man who knows he is old, but does not care to acknowledge it, to accompany on a pony for a little way his friends, who are keen for their sport, to set them off on the twelfth without being able to go a step or fire a shot with them. Those doctors, what did they know? They had probably sent him off, not knowing what more to do for him, that they might not be troubled with the sight of him dying before their eyes.

Then, however, there came before Sir Robert, by some more kindly touch of memory, certain scenes from the old life, when Dalrugas was the warmest and happiest home in the world, always overflowing with kindly neighbours and friends of youth. Their names came back to him one by one—Duffs, Gordons, Sinclairs: where were they all now? There would be at least their representatives in all the old places—sons, nay, perhaps grandsons, of his contemporaries, young asses that would turn up their noses at a *vieille moustache*: yet perhaps some of the old folk too. Lily would know: no doubt but Lily would know every one of them. She would have her partners among the boys and her cronies among the girls. He felt glad that Lily was here to renew the alliances of the old place. What had he sent her here for by-the-bye? Something about a silly sweetheart that she would not give up, the silly

thing. Probably she would have forgotten his very name by this time, as Sir Robert did : and there would be another now waiting his sanction. Well, no harm if it was a fit match for the last Ramsay. He would insist upon that. Somebody that had gear enough, and good blood, and a proper place in the world. No other should poor James's daughter marry : that was one thing sure.

And then he began to think what had become of Lily, that she had neither come to meet him last night nor appeared this morning. Was she bearing malice ? or sulking at her old uncle ? He would soon see there was an end to that. If she was ill she must have the doctor. If it was but some silly cold or other, or the headache that a woman sets up at a moment's notice, she must get up out of her bed, she must come downstairs. Self-indulgence was good for nobody, especially at Lily's age. He would see her woman, Beenie, who was her shadow, and whom Sir Robert began to recollect he had not seen any more than Lily herself. And then the alternative should be given her—the doctor, who would stand no nonsense, or to get up and put a shawl about her, and nurse her cold by the fireside, where she could talk to him, and be much better than if she were in bed. Sir Robert quickened Rory's paces, and, indeed, as the pony was nothing loth to reach his stable, appeared at the house with almost undignified haste to put in immediate operation this plan.

#### CHAPTER XXXIV.

"No better this morning ! What is the matter with her ? I never heard Lily was unhealthy or delicate."

"She is neither the one nor the other," said Katrin, indignant, "but she's not well to-day. The best of us, Sir Robert, we're subject to that."

"Ye think so !" he said rather fiercely, as if it were a dogma to question. And then he added, "There's that big Beenie-creature, that is, I suppose, as much with her as ever—send her to me."

"Eh, Sir Robert, how is she to leave Miss Lily that is just not well at all this morning ?"

"Send her to me at once," the old gentleman said, imperatively. He went into the dining-room, which was on the lower floor and the room he

liked best, the most comfortable in the house. There were no signs of a woman's presence in that room. A vague wonder crossed his mind if after all Lily had been here at all ? He forgot that he had been much incommoded the evening before by the books and the work-baskets, the cushions and the footstools, which had demonstrated the sometime presence of a woman upstairs. He kept walking up and down the room stiffly, feeling his foot a little as he owned to himself. Sir Robert truly felt that he would not be sorry if the prescription of his native air failed manifestly at once.

"Well," he said, turning round hastily at a timid opening of the door. "How's your mistress : how's my niece ? What does she mean by taking shelter in her bed, and never appearing to bid me welcome ?"

"Oh, Sir Robert, Miss Lily——" said Beenie. She held the door open and stood leaning against the edge, as if ready to fly at a call from without or a thrust from within. Beenie's hair, which it was difficult to keep tidy at the best of times, hung over her pale countenance like a cloud, a short lock standing out from her forehead. We are accustomed now to every vagary of which hair is capable, and are not disturbed by loose locks : but in those days strict tidiness was the rule—and Beenie, very white as to her cheeks and red round the eyes, partly with tears, partly with watching, was, to Sir Robert, a being unworthy of any confidence.

"Woman !" he cried, "you look as if you had been up all night—and not a fit person to be a lady's body servant, and with her night and day."

"Fit or no," said Beenie, with a sob, "I'm the one Miss Lily's aye had, and her and me will never be parted either with her will or mine."

"We'll see about that," said Sir Robert. But he was a wise man enough to know that a favourite servant was a difficult thing to attack. He asked peremptorily, "What is the matter with her ?" placing himself, like a judge, in the great chair.

"Eh, Sir Robert, if Marg'ret, my cousin, had been here, that is half a doctor herself ! but me, I know nothing," cried Beenie, wringing her hands.

"Is it a cold ?"

"It was, maybe, a cold to begin with," said Beenie, cautiously, but then she melted into tears and cried, "she's awfu' fevered, she's the colour o'



fire, and kens nothing"—in a lamentable voice. "Bless me," cried Sir Robert, "is there any fever about?"

"There's nae fever about that I ken of—there's nae folk hereby to get a fever," Beenie said.

"Then I'll go and see her myself," cried Sir Robert, rising from his chair.

"Eh, Sir Robert," cried Katrin from behind the door, "you a gentleman that could do the puir thing no good! It's better to leave her to us women folk."

"There is truth in that too," Sir Robert said. He took a turn about the room and then sat down again in his chair, his forehead contracted with a line of annoyance and perplexity which might have been called anxiety by a charitable onlooker. Beenie had seized the opportunity of Katrin's appearance to hurry away, and he found himself face to face with his housekeeper. He gave a long breath of relief. "It's you, Katrin," he said, "you're a sensible person according to your lights. There's fever with all things—a wound (but that's of course impossible for her) or a cold or any accident. What's your opinion? Is it a thing that will pass away?"

"Leave her with Beenie and me for another day, Sir Robert, and the morn, if she's no better, I'll be the first to ask for a doctor: and eh, I hope it's safe no to have him the day." The latter part of this speech Katrin said to herself under cover of the door.

"She'll have got cold coming home late from one of her parties," said the old gentleman, regaining his composure.

"Her pairties, Sir Robert!" said Katrin, almost with a shriek—"and where, poor thing, would she get pairties here?"

"She has friends, I suppose?" he said, with a little impatience, "companions of her own age. Where will young creatures like that not find parties, is what I would ask?"

"Eh, Sir Robert! but I'm doubting you've forgotten our countryside. There's Miss Eelen at the Manse that is her one great friend: and John Jameson's lass at the muckle farm, that has been at the school in Edinburgh, and would fain fain think herself a lady, poor bit thing, would have given her little finger to be friends with Miss Lily. But you would not have had her go to pairties in the farm-house: and at the Manse they give nane,

the minister being such a lameter. Pairties! the Lord bless us! Wha would ask her to pairties on this side of the moor?"

"There are plenty of people," said Sir Robert, almost indignantly, "that should have shown attention to my brother James's daughter, both for my sake and his. What do you call the Duffs, woman? and the Gordons of the Muckle moor, and Sir John Sinclair's family at the Lews; many a merry night have we passed among us when we were all young. The Duffs is not more than a walk, even if Lily were setting up for a fine lady, which, to do her justice, was not her way."

"Eh, hear till him!" breathed Katrin under her breath. She said aloud, "Times are awfu' changed, Sir Robert, since your days. The present Mr. Duff, he's married on an English lady, and they say she cannot bide the air of the Highlands, though it is well kent for the finest air in a' the world. He comes here whiles with a wheen gentlemen for the first of the shooting—but her never, and there's little to be said for a house when the mistress is never in it. Of the Gordons there's nane left but one auld leddy, the last of them, I hear, except distant connections. And as for Sir John at the Lews, poor man, poor man, he just died broken-hearted, one of his bonnie boys going to destruction after the other. They say the things are to be roupit and the auld mansion house to be left desolate, for of the twa that remain the one's a ne'er-do-well, and the other a puir avaricious creature, feared to spend a shilling, and I canna tell which is the worst."

"Bless me, bless me," Sir Robert had gone on saying, shaking his head. He was receiving a rude awakening. He saw in his mind's eye the old house running over with lively figures, with fun and laughter—and now desolate. It gave him a great shock, partly from the simple fact which by itself was overwhelming, partly because of a sudden pity which sprang up in his mind for Lily, and, most of all, for himself. What, nobody to come and see him, to tell the news and hear what was in the London papers, no cheerful house to form an object for his walk, no men to talk to, no ladies to whom to pay his old-fashioned compliments! This discovery went very much to his heart. After a long time he said, "It would be better to let the houses than to leave them to go to rack and ruin, or

shut up, as you say—the best houses in the countryside.”

“Let them!” cried Katrin, “Gentlemen’s ain houses! We’re maybe fallen low, Sir Robert, but we’re no just fallen to that.”

“You silly woman! the grandest folk do it,” cried Sir Robert—then he added in a lower tone, “Lily, I am afraid, may not have had a very lively life.”

“You may well say that,” cried Katrin, “Poor bonnie lassie, if she had bidden ony gangrel body on the road, or any person travelling that passed this way to come in and bear her company, I would not have been surprised for my part.”

Katrin spoke very deliberately, *avec intention*. It seemed well to prepare an argument, in case it might be used with effect another time. And Sir Robert was much subdued. He had not meant to inflict such a punishment upon his niece. He had believed, indeed, that her life at Dalrugas would be even more gay than her life in Edinburgh. There the parties might occasionally be formal, or the convives bores, according to his own experience at least: but here there was nothing but the good, warm, simple intimacy of the country, the life almost in common, the hospitable doors always open. If a compunctious recollection of Lily ever crossed his mind, in the midst of his own elderly amusements, this was what he had been in the habit of saying to himself: “There will be lads enough to make a little queen of her, and lasses enough to keep her company—for she’s a bonnie bit thing when all is said.” He had always been a little proud of her, though she had been a great trouble to him: and he thought he knew that in his old home Lily would be fully appreciated. That he had sent her out into the wilderness had never entered his thoughts. He dismissed Katrin with an uneasy mind, imploring her, almost with humility, to do everything she could think of for his poor Lily, and if she was not better in the morning, to send at once for the best doctor in the neighbourhood. Who was the best doctor in the neighbourhood? Indeed, there was but little choice: the doctor at Kinloch-Rugas, who was not so young as he once was, and had, alas, a sore weakness for his glass—and the one at Ardenlennie on the other side, who was well spoken of. “Let it be the one at Ardenlennie,” Sir Robert said. He spent rather a wretched day afterwards, taking two

or three short constitutionals, up and down the high road, three quarters of an hour at a time, to wile away the lonely day until his friends returned from the moor. It was far too painful an ordeal, to spend the twelfth of August alone in this place where, in his recollection, the twelfth of August had always been ecstasy. He should have chosen another moment. He had not imagined that he would have felt so much his own disabilities of old age. He had been wont to boast that he did not feel them at all, one kind of enjoyment having been replaced by another, and his desire for athletic pleasures having died a natural death in the perfection of his matured spirit and changed tastes, which were equal to better things. But he had certainly subjected himself to too great a trial now. That the twelfth should be his first day at home, and that all his sport should consist of a convoy given to the sportsmen, on the back of Rory, but not a gun for his own shoulder, not a step on the heather for his foot! It was too much. He had been a fool: and then this silly misadventure of Lily and her illness to make everything worse.

A moment of comparative comfort occurred in the middle of the day, when he had his luncheon. “Really that woman’s not bad as a cook,” he said to himself. She was but a woman, and a Scotch, uncultivated creature, but she had her qualities—and there was taste in what she sent him, that priceless gift, especially for an old man. He took a little nap after his luncheon, and then he took another walk, and so got through the day till the sportsmen came back. They came in noisy and triumphant, with their bags, and their stories of what happened at this and that corner, of the cheepers that had been missed and the old birds that were full of guile. Had they been Sir Robert’s sons it is possible that he might have listened benignly, and felt more or less the pleasure by proxy, which some gentle spirits taste. But they were strangers, mere “friends” in the jargon of the world, meaning acquaintances more or less intimate. Of the three he bore best the laughter and delight and brags and eagerness, to shew his own prowess, of the young man. The others awakened a sharper pang of contrast. “Almost my own age!” alas! the difference between fifty and seventy is the unkindest of comparisons. They were not even good companions for him in

the evening. When they had talked over every step of their progress, and every bird that had fallen before them, and eaten of Katrin's good dishes an enormous dinner, the strong air of the moor, and the hot fire of the peats, and the fatigue of the first day's exercise and excitement overpowered them one after another with sleep. This would not have been the case had Lily been afoot, to sing a song or two and keep them to their manners. Sir Robert was driven to the expedient of sending for Dougal when they had all, with many excuses, gone to bed. Dougal was sleepy too, and tired, though not so much so as "the gentlemen" to whom the grouse and the moor were, more or less, novelties. He gave his wife a curious look when Sir Robert's man called him to his master, and Katrin responded with one that partly entreated and partly threatened. She said, "You can tell him Miss Lily is very bad, and I'll get the doctor the first thing the morn."

Dougal uttered no word. He could not wear his bonnet when he went up to see the Laird, but he took it in his hands, which was some small consolation. He was in a dreadful confusion of mind, not knowing what was to be said to him, what was to be demanded of him. He might be about to be put through his "questions," and want all his strength to defend himself: or it might be nothing at all, some nonsense about the guns or the birds. His heavy shock of hair stood up from his forehead, giving something of an ox-like breadth and heaviness of brow. He held his head somewhat down, with a trace of defiance. Katrin might gloom: it was little he cared for Katrin when his blood was up: but there was not a bit of the traitor in Dougal. No blood of a black Monteith in him, if they were to put the thumbscrews on him or matches atween his fingers. That poor bonnie creature, whatever was her wyte, they should get nothing to trouble her out of him.

"Well Dougal," said Sir Robert, dangerously genial, "you see I'm left all alone. My friends they have gone to their beds, as if they were caltans home from the school."

"The gentlemen would be geyan tired," said Dougal, "they're English, and no accustomed to our moors, and some of them no so young either. You never kent that, Sir Robert, you that were to the manner born."

"But too auld for that sort of thing, Dougal, now."

"Maybe, and maybe not," said Dougal. "There's naething like the auld blood and the habit o't. I'd sooner see you cock a rifle, Sir Robert, though I say it as shouldna, than the whole three of them."

"No, no, Dougal," said Sir Robert, "that's flattery. They're not very good shots then," he said, with a smile. He was not indisposed to hear this of them, though they were his friends.

"Well, Sir Robert, I wouldna say, on their ain kind o' ground, among the stubble and that kind o' low-country shooting which, I'm tauld, is the common thing *there*: but no on our moors. When you're used to the heather it's a different thing."

"No doubt there is something in that," Sir Robert allowed with discreet satisfaction. And then he added, "What's this I hear from your wife about all the old neighbours, and that there's scarcely a house open I knew in my young days?"

"What is that, Sir Robert?" said Dougal, cautiously.

"The neighbours, ye duncie, my old friends that were all about the countryside when I was young—and that I thought would be friends for my poor little Lily when she came here. I'm told there's not one of them left."

Dougal did not readily take up what was meant, but he held his own firmly. "There's been nae gentleman's house," he said, "what you would call open and receiving visitors round about Dalrugas as long as I mind—no more than Dalrugas itself."

"Ah, Dalrugas itself," said Sir Robert, a little abashed. It was true—if the others had closed their doors, so had Dalrugas: if they were left to silence and decay, so had his own house been. Other reasons had operated in his case, but the result was the same. "I'm afraid, Dougal," he said, "that my poor little Lily has had an ill time of it, which I never intended. Give me your opinion on the subject. Your wife's a very decent woman—and an excellent cook, I will say that for her—but she's like them all, she stands up for her own side. She would have me think that my niece has been very solitary among the moors. Now that was never what I intended. Tell me true, has Miss Lily been a kind of prisoner, and seen nobody, as Katrin says?"

Dougal pushed his mass of hair to one side as if it had been a wig. "The young leddy," he said, "had none o' the looks of a prisoner, Sir

Robert. I've seen her when you would have thought it was the very sun itself shining on the moor."

"You're very poetical, Dougal," said Sir Robert, with a laugh.

"And she would whiles sing as canty as the birds, and off upon Rory as light as a feather, down to the market to see all the ferlies o' the toun, and into the Manse for her tea."

"That sounds cheerful enough," said the old gentleman, "though the ferlies of the town were not very exciting, I suppose. And old Blythe's still at the Manse? He's one of the old set left at least."

"He's an altered man noo, Sir Robert: never a step can he make out o' his muckle chair; they say he's put into his bed at nicht, but it's a mystery to me and many more how it's done, for he's a muckle heavy man. But year's end to year's end he's just living on in his muckle chair."

"Lord bless us," Sir Robert said. He looked down on his own still shapely and not inactive limbs, with an involuntary shiver of comparison, and then he added with a half laugh, "A man that liked his good dinner, and a good bottle of wine, and a good crack, with any of us."

"That did he, Sir Robert," Dougal said.

"Poor old Blythe! I must go and see him," said the happier veteran with an unconscious stretch of his capable legs, and throwing out of his chest. It was not any pleasure in the misfortune of his neighbour which gave him this glow of almost satisfaction. It was the sense of his own superiority in well-being, the comparison which was so much in his own favour. The comparison this morning had not been in his own favour and he had not liked it. He felt now, let us hope, with a sensation of thankfulness, how much better off he was than Mr. Blythe.

"Well, well, the Manse was always something, Dougal," he said, "Mansees are cheerful places, there's always a great coming and going. I hope there was nobody much out of her own sphere that Miss Lily met there—no young ministers coming up here after her, eh? they have a terrible flair for lasses with tochers, these young ministers, Dougal?"

"Ay, Sir Robert, that have they," said Dougal, "but I've seen no minister here."

"That was good luck for Lily—or we that are

responsible for her," said the old gentleman. "Well, Dougal, my man, you'll be tired yourself and ready for your bed, and to make an early start to-morrow with the gentlemen."

"Ay, Sir Robert," said Dougal. He was very glad to accept his dismissal and to feel that without so much as a fib he had kept his own counsel and betrayed nothing. But when he had reached the door he turned round again, crushing his bonnet in his hands. "I was to tell you Miss Lily was no better, poor thing, and that the women thought the doctor would have to be sent for the morn."

Sir Robert's countenance clouded over, "Tchick, tchick," he said, with an air of perplexity. "You'll see that the best man in the neighbourhood is the one that's sent for," he cried.

#### CHAPTER XXXV.

THERE had been a pause after Lily called to Marg'ret to bring the baby on the night when Ronald left her. Marg'ret, though very kind, was a person who liked her own way. If the child's toilet was not complete, according to her own elaborate rule, she did not obey in a moment even the eager call of the young mother. There were allowances made for her, as there always are for those who insist upon having their own way.

Accordingly, there was a pause. Lily lay and listened to the wheels of the geeg which carried Ronald away. They did not bring the same chill to her heart as usual, and yet a chill began to steal into the room. The night was warm and soft—the early August, which in the North is the height of summer, and there was no chill at all in the atmosphere. It seemed to Lily's keen ears as she lay listening that the geeg paused as if something had been forgotten, but then went on at double speed, galloping up the brae, till the sound of the wheels was extinguished in the night and distance. Then she called again sharply, "Marg'ret, Marg'ret! bring in my baby." But still there was no reply.

"She's just a most fastidious woman, with all her dressings and her undressings. She'll no have finished him just to the last string tying," said Robina.

"Bid her come at once, at once!" cried Lily. "I want my little man."

And Beenie dived into the next room, which

was muffled in curtains—great precautions having been taken lest the cry of the child should be heard downstairs. There was another room still within that, into which the nurse occasionally retired: but there was no one in either place, nor were there any traces of the little garments lying about which betray a baby's presence—everything appeared to have been swept away. Beenie, who had come for the child with her rosy countenance beaming, stood still in consternation, her mouth open, her terrified eyes taking in everything with speechless dismay: for Marg'ret had never ventured downstairs as yet, nor had, they flattered themselves, a sound of the infant been heard, to awaken any question there. Beenie stood silent and terrified for a moment and then, instead of returning to her mistress, she flew downstairs. Katrin was alone, doing some of her delicate cooking carefully over the fire—all was still as if nothing but the most commonplace and tranquil events had ever happened there. Beenie, who had burst into the place like a whirlwind, again paused confounded by this every-day tranquillity. "Katrin, Katrin, where is Marg'ret," she cried, adding in a lower tone, "and the bairn?"

"What a question to ask me?" said Katrin. "She's with your mistress without a doubt. Have you taen leave of your senses," she murmured in a hurried undertone, "to roar out like that about a bairn—what bairn?"

Here Beenie found herself at the end of all her resources. She burst out into loud weeping. "She's no up the stair and she's no down the stair," cried Beenie, "and my bonnie leddy is crying out for her, and will not be satisfied. And she's no place that I can find her—neither her nor yet the bairn."

Katrin thrust her saucepan from her as if it had been the offending thing; she wiped her hands with her apron. She looked at Beenie, both of them pale with horror. "Oh, the ill man!" she cried. "Oh, the monster! Oh, sic a man for our bonnie dear. I have been misdoubting about the bairn—but wha could have expectit that a young man no hardened in iniquity would have thought of a contrivance like that!"

Beenie had no thought or time to spare even on such an enormity. "How am I to face her—and tell her?" she said.

And at this moment they heard Lily's voice

calling from above, at first softly, then shouting, screaming all their names. "Marg'ret!—Beenie! Katrin! Marg'ret! Marg'ret! Beenie! Katrin! where is my bairn?—where is my bairn?"

The two women flew up the stairs, at the head of which they found Lily in her white nightdress, with her feet bare, her hair waving wildly about her head, her face convulsed and drawn. "My bairn!" she cried, "my bairn! my little bairn! Where is Marg'ret? Where is my baby? Marg'ret! Marg'ret! Beenie! Katrin! bring me my baby—my baby!" She seized Beenie wildly with her trembling hands.

"Oh, my daurlin'!" Beenie cried, "Oh, my bairn—oh, my bonnie Miss Lily!"

Lily flung the large weeping woman from her with a passion of impatience. "Katrin!" she said, breathlessly, "you have sense; where is my baby—bring me my baby! My little bairn! Did ye ever hear that an infant like that should be kept from his mother? Marg'ret! Marg'ret! where has she taken my baby—my baby—my—"

Lily's voice rose to a kind of scream. She ceased to have command of her words, and went on calling, calling for Marg'ret, and for her child in an endless cry, not knowing what she said.

"You will come back to your bed first and then I will tell you," said Katrin. There was no one in the house but themselves, and they were isolated in this sudden tragedy from all the world by the distance and the silence of night and the moor. The door stood open at the foot of the stairs, and a cold air blew up through the long many-cornered passage, chill and searching notwithstanding the warmth of the night. Lily was glad to lean shivering upon the warm support of the kind woman who encircled her with her arm. "You will tell me—you will tell me," she murmured, permitting herself to be drawn back to her room. The blind had been raised from one of the windows, and the moonlight streamed in, crossing the dimly-lighted chamber with one white line of light. The bed, with the little table by it, and the candle burning calmly, seemed too peaceful for Lily's mood of suspense and alarm. She stood still in the moonlight, which seemed to make her figure luminous, with her white bare feet and pale face. "Tell me!" she cried, "tell me. Marg'ret! Marg'ret! where has she taken my baby? I want my baby—nothing more—nothing more."

"For the Lord's sake, men!" said Katrin, "ye are shivering and trembling. Go back to your bed."

"Oh, my daurlin!" cried the weeping Beenie.

"Oh, my bonnie lamb, he's just away with his father in the geeg. Ye needna cry upon Marg'ret; she'll no hear you, for its just her that's taken him away!"

"Oh, you born fool!" Katrin cried, supporting her young mistress with her arm.

But Lily twisted out of her hold. She turned upon Beenie, bringing her hands together wildly with a loud clap that startled all the silences about like the sudden report of a pistol, and then fell suddenly with a cry at their feet.

Since that moment she had not recovered consciousness. Both of them knew by the force of experience how dangerous a symptom in Lily's condition is the strong convulsive shivering which had seized her, and for the greater part of that dreadful night before Sir Robert's arrival they were both by her bedside striving with every kind of hot application to restore a natural temperature. But when they had partially succeeded in this, she still lay unconscious, sometimes agitated and disturbed, flinging herself about, with her arms over her head, and once or twice repeating, what filled them with horror, the extraordinary clap together of her hands—sometimes quite still and murmuring under her breath a continuous flow of inarticulate words, but never conscious of them or their ministrations, saying no word that had meaning in it. Sir Robert's arrival made a certain change, and left the weight of the nursing upon Beenie, Katrin, with her many additional labours, being unable to bear her share. They had already, however, had time for several consultations on the subject which Sir Robert naturally disposed of with so much ease, but which to the two women was a much more serious matter—a doctor. Would not a doctor divine at once with his keen, educated eyes what had happened so recently? Would not he read as clearly as in a book what had been the beginning of Lily's illness? She lay helpless now, able to give them no assistance in disposing of her—she, so wilful by nature, who had always got her own way, so far at least as they were concerned. It filled them with awe to look at her lying unconscious, and to feel that her fate was in their hands. What were they to do? They were responsible for her life or death.

The doctor, when he came, listened with very small attention to Beenie's long and confused story, chiefly made up from things she had read and heard of the causes of Lily's illness. Whatever the causes were, the result was clear enough. She was in a high fever, her faculties all lost in that confusion of violent illness which takes away at once all consciousness of the present and all personal control. Fever was an impressive word in those days, more alarming in some senses, less so in others, than now. It was not mapped out and distinct, with its charts and its well-known rules. There was not, so far as I am aware, such a thing as a clinical thermometer known, at least, not in ordinary practice: and the word meant something dangerously "catching," something before which nurses fled, and friends retired in dismay—which is not to say that those who suffered from it were less sedulously guarded and taken care of by their own people then than now. The first idea of both Beenie and Katrin, however, was that it must be "catching," being fever, and Sir Robert when he was informed was not much wiser. "Fever—where could she have got it?" he said, with a sudden imagination of some wretched beggar woman with a sick child who might have given it to the young lady. "It is not a thing of that kind. You are thinking of scarlatina or maybe typhus. Nothing of that sort. It does not spring from infection. It is brain-fever," the medical man said. "Brain-fever!" said Sir Robert, indignant, "there was never anything of that kind in my family:"—he took it as a reproach, as if the Ramsays had ever been a race subject to disturbance in the brain.

But whatever they said, it mattered little to Lily. She lay on her bed for hours together moving her restless head to and fro, muttering inarticulate words, then pouring forth a stream of vague discourse, through which there gleamed occasionally a ray of meaning, a wild sudden demand, a flash of protest and expostulation. "Not that! not him!" she would sometimes say, "anything but him:" and the doctor making out as much as that one day, believed that the poor girl had been refused her lover, and that it was the sudden arrival of the uncle, who was hostile to them, which had brought on or precipitated the trouble in her brain. Sometimes she would call for "Marg'ret, Marg'ret, Marg'ret!" in accents now of impatience, now of

despair. And then he asked who Marg'ret was and why she did not come, or rather "Which of you is Marg'ret?" to the confusion of the two women. "Oh, sir, neither her nor me," cried Beenie, "neither her nor me! but a woman that had something to do with her—in an ill moment." "Let her be sent for then," he said peremptorily. Beenie and Katrin had a great deal to bear. Knowing everything, they had to pretend they knew nothing, to shake their heads and wonder why the patient should utter words which were heartrending to them as betraying the dreadful persistence of that impression of misery in her mind which they knew so well. They gave themselves the comfort of exchanging a glance now and then, which was almost all the mutual consolation they had. For Katrin was very much occupied with the house-keeping and her work, and the necessity for satisfying her master and his guests, who, knowing nothing of Sir Robert's family, and never having seen his niece, did not propose to go away, as guests in other circumstances would have done. And Sir Robert was very far from desiring that they should go away. He was terrified to find himself here alone, without even Lily's company, and therefore said very little of her illness. What difference could it make to her if she never saw them, or heard of them, whether Sir Robert had company or not? So Katrin laboured morning and night to feed with her best the party in the dining-room, and with very imperfect help at first to look after all the wants of the gentlemen, while Beenie, isolated in her mistress's room, nursed night and day the helpless, unconscious creature who required so little yet needed so much care. These were not the days of carefully regulated nursing in which the most important matter of all is the preservation of the nurse's health and her meals and hours of taking exercise. It was an age when the household was sufficient for itself, and the domestic nurse devoted herself night and day to her charge, accepting all the risks and fatigue as a matter of course. Beenie had no help and wanted none. Sometimes for a moment's refreshment she would go down to the door, and breathe in a long draught of the fresh morning air, while Katrin stood by Lily's bed trying to elicit from her a look or sign of intelligence. But Beenie could not have remained absent from her young mistress had

the wisest of nurses been there to take her place. "Na, na, I've taen care of her a' her days, and I'll take care of her till the end," Beenie said, when Katrin exhorted her to take a few minutes more of the out-door freshness. "Hold your tongue, woman, with your ends," cried Katrin, "a young thing like that with a' her life in her! She will see us baith out." "Oh, the Lord grant it," cried Beenie, shaking her large head. "But how is she to live and face the truth and ken all that's happened, if ever she comes to herself? She will just sit up in her bed and clap her two hands together as she did yon dreadful night—and give up the ghost."

"God forgive him—for I canna," said Katrin, with a deep drawn breath.

"And Marg'ret! What do ye say to her, the deep designing woman, that had been planning it, nae doubt all the time?"

"Marg'ret!" cried Katrin with disdain, with the gesture of throwing something too contemptible for consideration from her. But she added, "There is just this to be said. We could not have keepit the bairn. No possible, her so ill, and the doctor about the house, and a wee thing that bid to have had the air and could not be keepit silent, nor yet hid. Oh, mony's the thought I've had on that awful subject. It was the deed of a villain, Beenie. Maybe God will forgive him, but never me. And yet being done, it's weel that it was done."

"Katrin!" cried Beenie in dismay.

But something perhaps in their low toned but vehement conversation had caught some wandering and confused faculty not entirely overwhelmed in Lily's bosom. She began to call out their names again with a wild appeal, "Marg'ret, Marg'ret!" above all the others, flinging out her arms and rising up in her bed, as Beenie had described in her gloomy anticipations, as if to give up the ghost.

And in this way days and weeks passed away. Lily's fever seemed to have become a natural part of the life of the house. Robina seemed to herself unable to remember the time when she went to bed at night and got up again in the morning like other people, and had ordinary meals and went and came about the house. And all the incidents that had gone before became dim. If an answer had been demanded of her hurriedly she could scarcely have ventured to affirm that

any one was true: the marriage ceremony in the Manse parlour, the meetings of the young husband and wife, and above all the last tremendous event which had seemed in its turn to be of more importance than anything else that ever occurred. They had all faded away into the background, while Lily, sometimes pale as a ghost, sometimes flushed with the agitation of fever, lay struggling between life and death. The doctor, an ordinary village doctor, knew little of such maladies. He was reduced by his practical ignorance, to the passive position which is now so often adopted by the highest knowledge. He watched the patient with anxious and sympathetic eyes, naturally sorry for a creature so young with her girlish beauty fading like a flower. He did not know what to do, and he wisely did nothing. He had made, as was natural, many attempts to find out how an attack so serious had been brought on. Had she received any great shock? Katrin and Beenie, looking at each other, had answered cautiously that maybe it might be so, but they could not tell. Had she suddenly heard any bad news? Oh, yes, poor thing, she had done that, very bad news that had just gone straight to her heart like the shot of a gun. "But doctor, you'll say nothing to Sir Robert of that." The doctor drew his own conclusions and satisfied himself. No doubt the shock was the arrival of the old uncle. He had heard something of the young gentleman who was always coming and going, and that the two would make a bonnie couple if everything went right, though this good-natured speech was accompanied by shakings of the head and prognostications of dreadful things that might happen if everything went wrong. The doctor nodded his head and made up his mind that he had penetrated the affair. It would not even have shocked him to hear that it had gone the length of a secret marriage. Private marriages acknowledged late were not looked upon in Scotland with very severe eyes. Both law and custom excused them, though in such a case as Lily's it was strange that anything of the kind should occur.

But it becomes of very little importance, when such a malady has dragged along its weary course for weeks, what was the cause of it. The rapid cures which a promise of happiness works, in fiction at least, very seldom occur in life: and when the spiritual part of the patient becomes

lost, as it were, in the hot running current of fevered blood, and the predominance of the agitated body is complete over all the commotions of the mind, it is vain to think of proposing remedies for the original wrong, even if that were possible. Sir Robert now and then paid a visit to his niece's room, short and unwilling, dictated solely by a sense of duty. He stood near the door and looked at her, tossing on her pillows, or lying as if dead in the apathy of exhaustion, with an uneasy sense, partly that he was himself badly used by Providence, partly that he might perhaps be partially himself to blame. He had left her here very lonely—perhaps it was a mistake in judgment; but then he had been entirely ignorant of the circumstances: and how could it be said to be his fault? When she began to talk he could not understand what she said—nor indeed could anyone in the quickened and hurrying incoherence of the utterance—except the cry of *Marg'ret*, *Marg'ret*, *Marg'ret*! which still sometimes came with a passion that made it intelligible from her lips. "Who was *Marg'ret*?" he asked, angrily. "I remember no person of that name." "*Marg'ret*! *Marg'ret*! *Marg'ret*!" cried Lily again, her confused mind caught by his repetition of the name. She flung herself towards the side of the bed which was nearest the door, opening her eyes wide as if to see better, and adding, with a cry of ecstasy, "She has brought him back—she has brought him back!" Sir Robert hurried away with a thrill of alarm. Who was it that was to be brought back? Who was the *Marg'ret* for whom she cried night and day? Was it the mere delirium of her fever, or was something else—something real and unknown—hidden below?

#### CHAPTER XXXVI.

SIR Robert had not at this time a happy life. His friends went away at last, having exhausted the little shootings of Dalrugas, and finding that social amusement of any kind was not to be found there—besides the ever-present reason of "illness in the house," why they should not outstay the limits of their invitation. And no one else came—why should they, considering how very little inducement he had to offer? This of itself was a hard confession for the proud old man to make, who



perhaps had been tempted now and then to enhance at his club, or in his favourite society, those attractions of his little patrimony, which were so very different, as he remembered them, from what they were now. John Duff, of Blackscour, made a call to say chiefly how sorry he was that he could show no civilities to his neighbour, having only come to a dismantled house for a few weeks' shooting, his wife being abroad. "I was glad to give a little sport to one of the young Lumsdens last year," he said. "I heard he was a friend of yours." "No friend of mine!" cried Sir Robert, suddenly recalled by the name to the original cause, which he had more than half forgotten, of Lily's banishment. "Ah!" cried John Duff, indifferently, "it was a mistake then. Of course I knew his father." This was the only social overture made to Sir Robert Ramsay, and it carried with it a sting, which gave him considerable uneasiness. "Would the fellow have the audacity to come after her here?" he asked himself. And he made up his mind wrathfully, when Lily was better, to inquire into this allusion. When Lily was better! but he was still more angry when any doubt was expressed on that subject. Katrin's tearful looks once or twice when the patient was worse he took as a personal affront. He would not believe that Providence, however hostile, could treat him so badly as that.

When he was in this lonely and unsatisfied state of mind, a letter came for him one day from the Manse, begging him in his charity to go and see the minister, who was unable to come to him. "Ah! old Blythe," Sir Robert said. He would not have thought very much of old Blythe in other days, but now he remembered, not without pleasure, the good stories the minister told, and the good company he was. "Will Rory last with me as far as the Manse?" he said to Dougal. "Rory, Sir Robert, he'll just last till the day o' judgment," said Dougal. "I have no occasion for him so far as that!" Sir Robert replied, sharply: and he felt that it was not quite becoming his dignity to ride into Kinloch-Rugas mounted upon a Highland pony: but what can one do when there is no other way? The minister sat as usual in his great chair by the fire, which burned dully still, though the day was August. He said, "Come in, Sir Robert, come ben! I'm very glad to see you, though it is a long time since we met.

You will, maybe, find the fire too much at this time of the year, but you see I'm a lameter that cannot move out of my chair, and I never find it warm enough for me."

"You should have a chair that you could move about and get into the sun now and then; that's the only thing that warms the blood—at our age."

"I am years older than you. I consider you a fine trim and trig elderly young man."

The minister laughed more cordially at this jest than Sir Robert did. He did not like the faintest suggestion of ridicule. It is true that he was trim and well dressed, an example of careful toilet and appearance beside the careless old heavy form in the easy chair. Mr. Blythe had long since ceased to care what his appearance was. Sir Robert was "very particular" and careful of every detail.

"And how are you liking your home coming?" Mr. Blythe said. "It's a trial and a risk when you have been away all the best of your life. I'm doubting the auld Tower looks but small to your eyes by what it did in the old days."

"Things are changed certainly," said Sir Robert, a little stiffly, "especially among the old neighbours. There used to be plenty of society; now there seems none, or next to none."

"And that is true. The old folk are dead and gone; the young generation is changed, the lads go away and never come back, the lasses marry into strange houses. It's very true: but you are just very fortunate, like me, you have a child to your old age: though you did not, like me, Sir Robert, take the trouble to provide her for yourself."

Sir Robert stared a little at this speech and then said, "If you mean my niece Lily, Blythe, you probably know that she's very ill in bed, and a cause of great anxiety, not of comfort, to me."

"Aye, aye," said the minister, "we had heard something, but did not know it was so bad as that. But it will be a thing that will pass by, just some chill she has got out on the moor, or some other bit small matter. She has been very well and blooming, a fine young creature all the time we have had her here."

"I am by no means sure," said Sir Robert, with a cloud on his brow, "that I did not make a mistake in sending her here. I had no intention to send her into a desert. My mind was full of the old times when we were cheerful enough, as you will remember, Blythe, whatever else we might

be. There was not much money going—nor perhaps luxury—but there was plenty of company. However, I'm glad you have so good a report to give of her. She's neither well nor blooming, poor lassie, now."

The minister cleared his throat two or three times as if he found it difficult to resume. "Sir Robert," he said, and then made a pause, "I am not a man that likes to interfere. I have as little liking for that part, as you or any man could have—to be meddled with in what you will think your own affairs."

Sir Robert stiffened visibly, uplifting his throat in the stiff stock, which, in his easiest moment, seemed to hold him within risk of strangulation. "I fail to see," he said, "what there is in my affairs that would warrant interference from you or any man: but if you've got anything to say, say it out."

"I meddle with nobody," said the minister as proudly, "unless it is for the young of the flock. I can scarcely call you one of my flock, Sir Robert."

"A gruesome auld tup, at the best you'll be thinking," said Sir Robert, with a harsh laugh.

"Man!" said the minister, "at the least of it we are old friends. We know each other's mettle: if we quarrel it'll do little good or harm to anybody. And if you like to fling off in a fit you must just do it. What I've got to say is just this: Women folk are hard to manage for them that are not used to them. I've not just come as well out of it as I would have liked myself: and that little thing up at Dalrugas is a tender bit creature. She has blossomed like the flowers when she has been let alone, and never lost heart, though she has had many a dull day. Do not cross the lassie above what she is able to bear. If you're still against the man she likes herself, for the love of God, Robert Ramsay, force no other upon her, as you hope to be saved!"

The old minister was considerably moved, but this did not perhaps express itself in the most dignified way. What with the fervour of his mind and the heat of the fire, and the little unusual exertion, the perspiration stood in great drops on his brow.

"This is a very remarkable appeal, Blythe," said Sir Robert. "I force another man upon her! Granted there is one she likes herself, as you seem

so sure—though I admit nothing of my own knowledge—am I a man to force a husband down any woman's throat?"

"I will beg your pardon humbly if I'm wrong," said Mr. Blythe, subdued, wiping the moisture from his face, "but if you think a moment you will see that appearances are against you. We heard of your arriving in a hurry with a young gentleman in your train: and then there came the news Miss Lily was ill—she that had stood out summer and winter against that solitude and never uttered a word—that she should just droop the moment that it might have been thought better things were coming, and company and solace—Sir Robert, I ask you—"

"To believe that it was all out of terror of me!" cried Sir Robert, who had risen up and was pacing angrily about the room. "Upon my word, Blythe, you reckon on an old soldier's self-command above what is warranted! Me, her nearest relation, that have sheltered and protected her all her life—do you mean to insinuate that Lily is ill and has a brain fever out of dread of me?"

"If you brought another man to her, knowing her wishes were a different way, and bid her take him or be turned out of your doors!"

Sir Robert was not a man who feared anything. He stood before the minister's very face, and swore an oath that would have blown the very roof off the house had Mr. Douglas, the assistant and successor, sat in that chair. Mr. Blythe was a man of robust nerves, yet it impressed even him. "I force a young man down a lassie's throat!" cried Sir Robert, in great wrath, indignation, and furious derision. "Me make matches or mar them! Is't the decay of your faculties, Blythe, your old age, though you're not much older than I am, or what is it that makes you launch such an accusation at me?"

"There's nothing decayed about me but my legs," said the old minister, with half a jest. "I'll beg your pardon heartily, Sir Robert, if it's not true."

"You deserve no explanations at my hands," said the other, "but I'll give them for the sake of old times. The young man was a chance acquaintance for a week's shooting. I'll perhaps never see him again, nor did he ever set eyes on Lily. And I have not exchanged a word with her since I came back. She knows me not—from you, or from Adam. Blythe, she is very ill, the

poor lassie. She knows neither night nor day."

"Lord bless us!" said the minister, and then he put forth his large soft hand. "I beg your pardon," he said. "See how little a thing makes a big lie and slander when it's taken the wrong colour. I was deceived, but I hope you'll forgive. In whose hands is she?—what doctor? There's no great choice here."

"A man from the other side of the water," said Sir Robert, in the old phraseology of the countryside. "Macalister, I think."

"Well, it's the best you can do here. Our man's a cleverer man, if you could ever be sure of finding him with his head clear. But Macalister is an honest fellow. I would not say but I would have a man from Edinburgh if it was me."

"Do you think so?" said Sir Robert.

"If it was my Eelen—Lord, it's no one, but half-a-dozen men I'd have from Edinburgh before I'd see her slip through my fingers. But there's nothing like your own very flesh and blood."

"I will write at once," cried Sir Robert.

"I would send a man—the post's slow. I would send a man by the coach that leaves to-night: for an hour lost you might repent all the days of your life, Robert Ramsay," said the minister, once more grasping and holding fast, in his large, limp, but not unvigorous hand, the other old gentleman's firm and hard one. "Just bear with me for another word: if she's hanging between life and death—and you know not what may happen—and if there is a man in Edinburgh she would rather see than any doctor—for the love of God, man, don't do things by halves, but send for him too."

"What the deevil do you mean, with your 'man in Edinburgh'?" Sir Robert said, with a shout, drawing his hand forcibly away.

He rode home upon Rory, much discomfited and disturbed. It is scarcely too much to say that he had forgotten much or almost all about Ronald Lumsden in the long interval that had occurred, during which he was fully occupied with his own life, and indifferent to what took place elsewhere. He had sent Lily off to Dalrugas to free her from the assiduities of a young fellow who was not a proper match for her. That is how Sir Robert would have explained it: and he had never entertained a doubt that, what with the fickleness of youth and the cheerful company about, Lily had forgotten her unsuitable suitor

long ago. But to have it even imagined, by the greatest old fool that ever was, that Lily's terror of being obliged by her uncle to accept another man had upset her very brain and brought on a deadly fever, was too much for any man to bear. And old Blythe was not an old fool, though he had behaved like one. If he thought so, other people would think so, and he—Robert Ramsay, General, K.C.B.—a man almost as well known as the Prince of Wales himself, a member of the best clubs, an authority on every social usage, he, the venerated of Edinburgh, the familiar of London, he would be branded, in a miserable hole in the country, with the character of a domestic tyrant, with the still more contemptible character of a match-maker, like any old woman! Sir Robert's rage and annoyance were increased by the consciousness that he was not himself cutting at all a dignified figure on the country road, mounted upon Rory, for whom his legs were too long (though he was not a tall man), and his temper too short. Rory tossed his shaggy head to the winds, and did battle with his master, when the pace did not please him. He all but threw the old gentleman, who was famed for his horsemanship. And it was in the last phase of exasperation, having dismounted, and, with a blow of his light switch, sent Rory careering home to his stable riderless, that Sir Robert encountered the doctor returning from his morning's visit. Mr. Macalister's face was grave. He turned back at once, and eagerly, desiring, he said, a few minutes' conversation. "I cannot well speak to you with your people and those women always about."

"I am afraid then," said Sir Robert, "you have something very serious to say."

"Maybe—and maybe not. In the first place there are indications this morning of a change—we will hope for the better. The pulse has fallen. There's been a little natural sleep. I would say in an ordinary subject, and with no complications, that perhaps, though we must not just speak so confidently at the first moment—the turn had taken place."

"I'm delighted to hear it," cried Sir Robert. It was really so great a relief to him that he put out his hand in sudden cordiality. "I will never forget my obligations to you, Macalister. You have given me the greatest relief. When the turn has really come there is nothing, I've always heard,

but great care wanted—care and good food and good air.”

“That was just what I wanted to speak to you about, Sir Robert,” said the doctor, with one of those little unnecessary coughs that mean mischief. “Good air there is—she could not have better: and good food, for I’ve always heard your housekeeper is great in that: and good nursing—well, yon woman, that is, your niece’s maid, Bauby or Beenie, or whatever they call her, is little more than a fool, but she’s a good-hearted idiot, and sticks to what she’s told—when there’s nobody to tell her different. So we may say there’s good care. But when that’s said, though it’s a great deal, everything is not said.”

“Ay,” said Sir Robert, “and what may there be beyond that?” He had become suspicious after his experiences, though it did not seem possible that from such a quarter there should come any second attack.

“I’m very diffident,” said the doctor, in his strong Northern accent, with his ruddy, weather-beaten countenance cast down in his embarrassment, “of mentioning anything that’s not what ye might call strictly professional, or taking advantage of a medical man’s poseetion. But when a man has a bit tender creature to deal with, like a flower, and that has just come through a terrible illness—the grand thing to ask will be, Sir Robert, not if she has good food and good nursing, which is what is wanted in most cases, but just something far more hard to come by—if she’s wanting to live——”

“Wanting to live!” cried Sir Robert. “What nonsense are you speaking? A girl of that age.”

“It’s just precisely that age that fashes me. Older folk have got more used to it: living’s a habit with the like of us. We just find we must go on, whatever happens: but a young lass is made up of fancies and veesions. She says to herself: ‘I would like better a bonnie green turf in the kirkyard than all this fighting and striving,’ and just fades away because she has no will to take things up again. I’ve seen cases like that before now.”

“And what’s my part in all this?” cried Sir Robert. “You come to me with your serious face as if I had some hand in it. What can I do?”

“Well, Sir Robert,” said the doctor, “that is what I cannot tell. I’m not instructed in your

affairs—nor do I wish to be: but if there is anything in this young lady’s road that crosses her sorely—the state of the brain that made this attack so dangerous evidently came from some mental shock—if it’s within the bounds of possibility, that you can give in to her, do so, Sir Robert. I am giving you a doctor’s advice—not a private man’s that has nothing ado with it. If you can give her her own way, which is dear to us all, and more especially to women folk, give it to her, Sir Robert! It will be her best medicine. Or if you cannot do that, let her think you will do it—let her think you will do it! It’s lawful to deceive even in a case like this—to save her life.”

“You are trying to make me think, doctor, that my niece has been pretending to be ill all this time, in order to get her own way.”

“You may think that if you like, Sir Robert. It’s a pretending that has nearly cost you a funeral, and I will not say may not do so yet—but me, out of my own line, my knowledge is very imperfect. You know your own affairs best. But you cannot say I have not warned you of the consequences,” Dr. Macalister said.

All the world seemed in a conspiracy against Sir Robert. He took off his hat formally to the doctor who responded, somewhat overawed by such a solemn civility. What was it that this man, a stranger, supposed him to be doing to Lily? It was ridiculous, it was absurd! first old Blythe, and then the doctor. He had never done any harm to Lily: he had stopped a ridiculous love-affair, a boy and girl business with a young fellow who had not a penny. He did not mean his money to go to fit out another lot of long-legged Lumsdens, a name he could not bear. No, he had done no more than was his right, which he would do again tomorrow, if necessary. But then in the meantime here was another question. Her life, a lassie’s life! Nothing was ever more ridiculous: her life depending on what lad she married, a red-headed one, or a black-headed one, the silly thing! But nevertheless, it seemed it was true. Here was the doctor, a serious man—and old Blythe, both in a story: well, if she were dying for her lad, the foolish tawpy, he would have to see what could be done. To think of a Ramsay, the last of his race, following her passions like that. But it would be some influence from the other side, from the mother, James’s wife, who, he had always heard, was not over wise.

He was turning over these thoughts in his mind as he approached close to the house, when he was suddenly aware of some one flying out towards him with arms extended and a lock or two of red hair dropped out of all restraint and streaming in the wind. Beenie had waited and watched and lived half in a dream, never sleeping, scarcely eating, absorbed in that devotion which has no bounds for the last six weeks. Her trim aspect, her careful neatness, her fresh and cheerful air had faded in the air of the sick room: combs do not hold, nor pins attach after such a long vigil. She flew out, running wildly towards him with arms extended

and hair streaming until, unable to stop herself, she fairly ran into the old gentleman's arms.

"Oh, Sir Robert," cried Beenie, gasping and trying to recover her breath, but too far gone for any apology, "she's come to herself! She's as weak as water, and white as death. But she's come to herself, and she's askin' for you. She's crying upon you, and no to be silenced. 'I am wanting Uncle Robert, I am wanting Uncle Robert.' No breath to speak, and no strength to utter a voice, but come to hersel', come to hersel'! And, oh! the Lord knows if it's for death or life: for none of us can tell."

*(To be continued.)*

## OLD MOONS.

"MOTHER, where do the old moons go?  
Do they fall on the mountains and fade to snow?  
Are they lying piled in the sea-caves low?

I've seen so many moons new-born—  
Small things bent like a cow's white horn,  
They grow up round and as yellow as corn.

So many moons—and I not nine!  
Mother, how many have you seen shine?  
And where are the old ones, mother mine?"

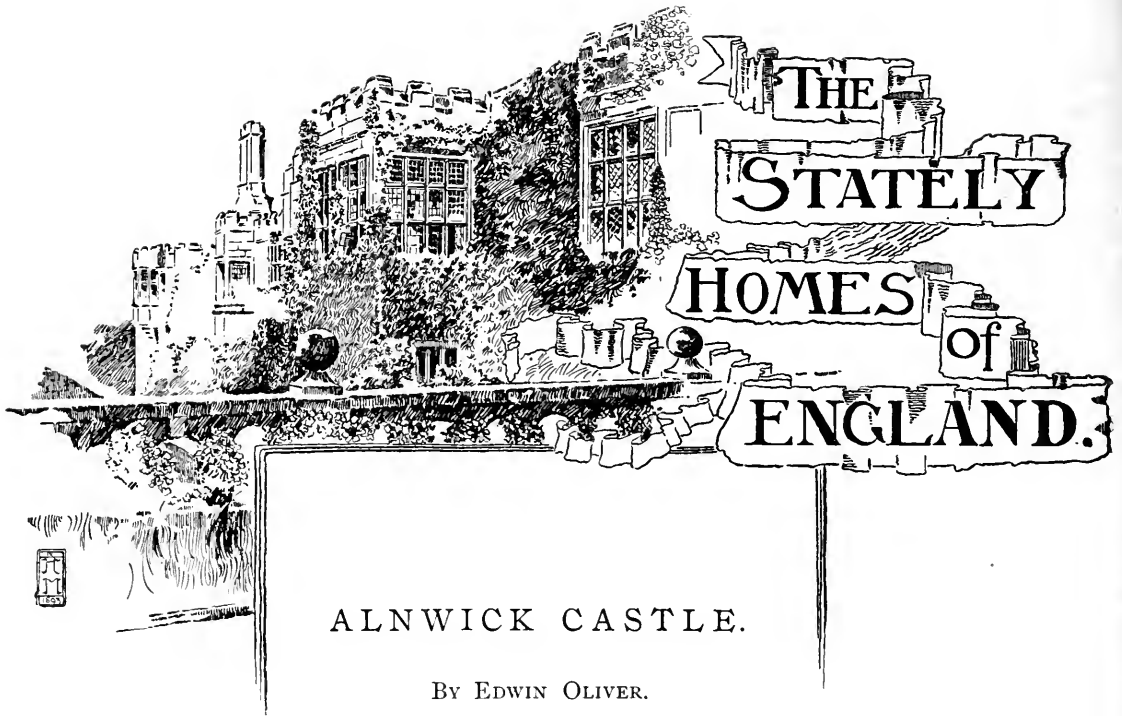
"They pass, my child, to a land most sweet,  
Where pleasant things and sad ones meet,  
Where no voice speaks, but all repeat.

They dwell in a country dim and far  
Black as the midnight, bright as a star,  
Where all your father's school-days are,

With sweet old songs for ever young,  
Sweet words said by a silenced tongue,  
And the bells for your mother's wedding rung,

With laughter hushed and tears unshed,  
Where old, old roses are fresh and red,  
Where the dead are alive and the living dead."

MAXWELL GRAY.



## ALNWICK CASTLE.

BY EDWIN OLIVER.

'THE Windsor of the North' is a relic of an age that carries as little actuality to our modernised intelligence as the voiceless mounds of the Nubian desert. Have we not seen a sturdy rock rise defiantly out of the flat waste of sand from which the sea has long receded? No more the chafing waves spend their force against those sullen sides; no more the circling gulls shriek and bicker round its storm-swept crest. There is a sense of peace in the dry, unbroken shore, and the ocean's broil is a far-off memory. Yet the lonely peak does not appear to relish the joys of security; it seems to miss the din and buffeting of the never-ending strife, the bracing tonic of a much-loved foe. And so it is with Alnwick. The battlements still keep watch across the lonely moors of the Borderland—still wait for the coming of the tattered clans, for the wild rush of a midnight raid. But no more the distant screech of the pibroch warns them of a gathering foe; no more the bonnet of a gaunt moss-trooper peeps above the flowering gorse. The Douglas and the Percy are no more, and we—we are dead to every sense of humour. When we meet a stranger in our smug excursions, we no longer yearn to cleave his skull or free his life's blood; we are content to hand him on our *Times*, or gauge his powers of meteorological prophecy. The age of

chivalry and daring is relegated to the realms of gnomes and pixies, and, to our ears, lacks reality.

Yet it was a brave old time when Chevy Chase was possible, and Bannockburn a fact. Hotspur is no Lancelot of myth, but a type of his period, tender in his love as he was ruthless in his hate, breathing freest in the van of battle with a trusty blade in hand and a stout foe before him; looking on his own life or another's as a gambler on his final stake.

O, Harry, thou hast robbed me of my youth!

I better brook the loss of brittle life

Than those proud titles thou hast won of me:

They wound my thoughts worse than thy sword my flesh.

Can we not picture him seated in "Hotspur's Chair," as the recess in the Ravine Tower is called, *ennui'd* at the temporary truce with the Scot, hatching a fresh *casus belli* to vary the monotony, or scanning the approach of the tartan ranks as they timorously fall upon his stronghold.

A little to the South of the Castle is Otterbourne, where the famous encounter with "the dowghtye Douglass" took place. The Northern earl, in conjunction with other nobles, had invaded the county at the head of a large force. Continuing his triumphant progress to Newcastle, he was checked by the arms of the Percy. A personal encounter took place between the illustrious





leaders, in which Douglas proudly bore off the pennoned lance of his antagonist, boasting that it should grace his castle of Dalkeith. Hotspur registered as great an oath that this should not be, and, gathering together the full strength of the marches, fell upon the Celtic host by night as they lay encamped at Otterbourne. Romance has

nothing better to offer than the story of this contest. The

leaving the mighty Percy a prisoner behind them.

The neighbourhood teems with such enchanting legends. At the gates of the forest is a monument which records the capture, in 1174, of the Scotch Monarch, William the Lion. He was returning from a pleasure trip, wherein he had devastated the lands of Cumberland, and unexpectedly found himself in front of the grim fortress of Alnwick. Before he could evade the awkward situation, he was promptly captured and held in durance until he eventually purchased his freedom by his kingdom's bondage. Malcom's Cross is another relic of the reckless daring which characterized the dark ages, and has been steadily discounted with the progress of reason. The inscription on it runs thus:—

Malcolm III.,  
King of Scotland,  
besieging  
Alnwick Castle,  
was slain here.  
Nov. XIII. An. MXCIII.

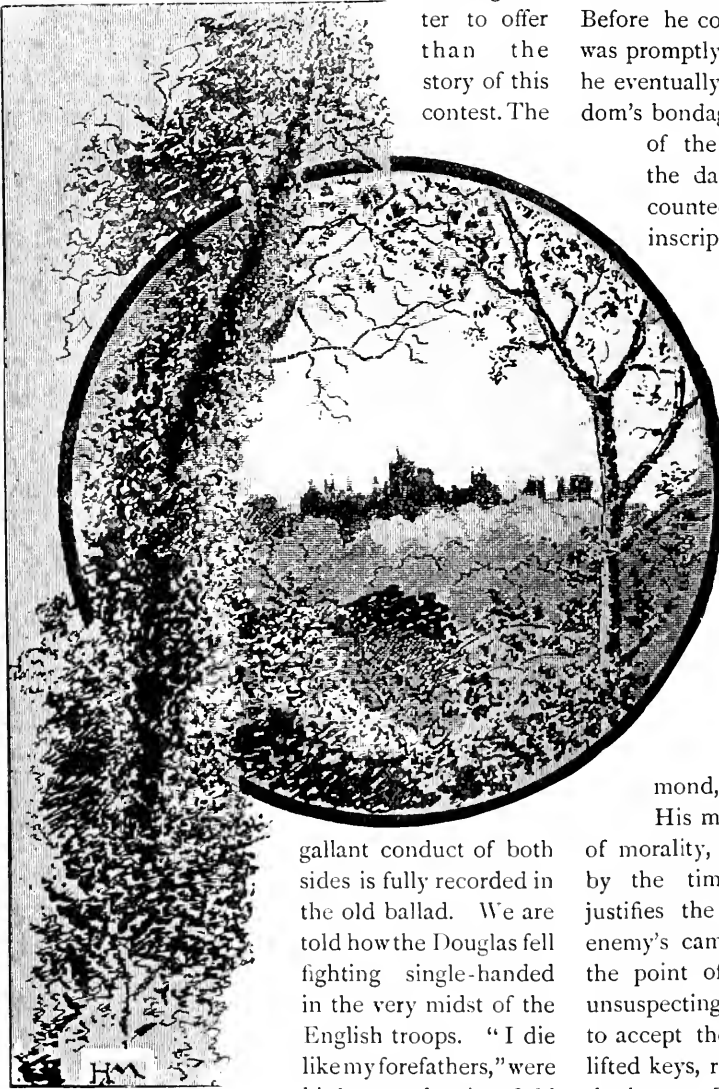
In the reign of Red William, the Scotch Sovereign himself headed a siege on the castle. The defence was manfully maintained by Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, who had distinguished himself earlier in the reign as a partisan of the Conqueror's first born. Fortune favoured the offenders, and capitulation seemed imminent, when a common soldier, whose name is reputed to be Ham-

mond, came to the salvation of his brethren.

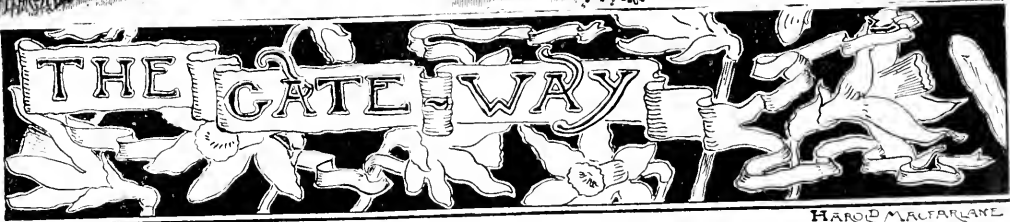
gallant conduct of both sides is fully recorded in the old ballad. We are told how the Douglas fell fighting single-handed in the very midst of the English troops. "I die like my forefathers," were his last words, "in a field

of morality, was at least effective, and defensible by the time-honoured adage that "the end justifies the means." He rode alone into the enemy's camp, bearing the keys of surrender on the point of his lance, and did homage to the unsuspecting Malcolm. The latter came forward to accept the submission, and, instead of the uplifted keys, received the deadly spear-point through the heart. The death of the monarch threw the troops into a panic, which enabled the hardy Hammond to make good his retreat across the river, turbid with recent floods. The spot is still called "Hammond's Ford." The heir of Scotland, Prince Edward, was also slain in a spirited attempt to avenge the deed. The "Bloody Gap" is another grim record of these Border frays. Legend

of battle and not on a bed of sickness. Conceal my death, defend my standard, and avenge my fall. It is an old prophecy, that a dead man shall gain a field, and I hope it will be accomplished to-night." And so it was. Despite the death of their chief, the Scots had the better of the day, and the Southerners retired at daybreak,







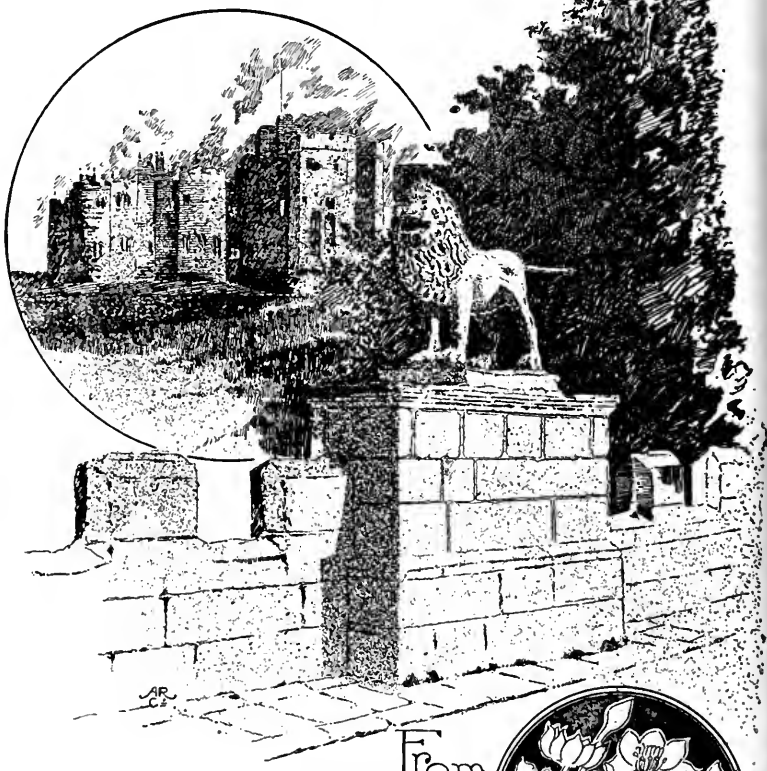
HAROLD MAFARLANE

says that three hundred dead replaced the battered masonry in the breach which the headlong rush of the gallant Scots had made in the wall, only to fall back before the yet more impregnable barrier of English valour. Numerous arrows found in the stonework testify to the deadly welcome which met the clans in their struggle for entry.

If Mr. Froude is right in his estimate that the genealogical lustre of a family depends upon the number of parts its members have taken in the tragedies of Tower Hill, then surely the pedigree of the Northumberlands must stand well to the front. They appear to have had a boundless prejudice against the orthodox exits from this world. To have passed away in the prosaic calm of old age, or in the tame monotony of a death-bed scene, would have been a slur on the escutcheon. A merry fling at the game of treason was an indispensable prelude, finishing with the hoarse shouts of the greasy mob, the hushed pause for the parting words, then the cool embrace of the friendly block, and the tender offices of the man with the mask. The de Vescis held Alnwick from the coming of the Normans until the close of the thirteenth century. It was Baron Eustace who entertained King John when that unwilling donor of our liberties received the homage of the Scotch Alexander. Such is royal gratitude; four years later we find him commissioning Philip de Ulecote to raze the fortress to the ground. However, the order was not fulfilled, for John paid two more visits to the Castle at a later period. His two successors on the throne conferred a similar honour upon it. When the de Vesci line languished for want of an heir, the barony came into the hands of Bishop Beke, of bellicose fame, who led the English cavalry when they vainly broke upon the solid squares of the patriots of Scotland at the battle of Falkirk. "It was the formation of Waterloo," says Green, "the first appearance in our history since the day of Senlac,

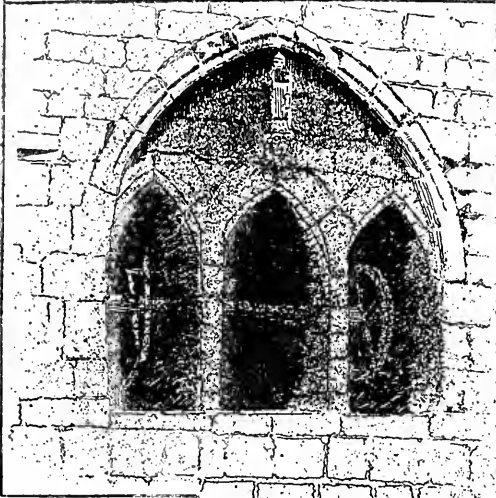
of 'that unconquerable British infantry,' before which chivalry was destined to go down." From the See of Durham it was purchased by Henry de Percy in 1309, the first of the illustrious house that for four centuries helped to make history by its predilection for forlorn political hopes.

Henry Algernon, the fifth earl, was almost the only one for three centuries who had the misfortune to die quietly in his bed. But he atoned for this weakness by earning a reputation for both



"magnificence and economy." Shakespeare's Northumberland, and his more famous son, Hotspur, after placing the Lancastrian Henry on the throne, shed their life's blood in an equally impetuous attempt to displace him. John Skelton, the bard, in his "elegy," has mourned the virtues and sad end of the fourth earl, who was murdered by the people at Cocklodge, in Yorkshire, on the idea that he was responsible

for the war tax imposed by Henry VII. With the sixth Percy there is a temporary break in the line of earls. By pretending sickness, this noble

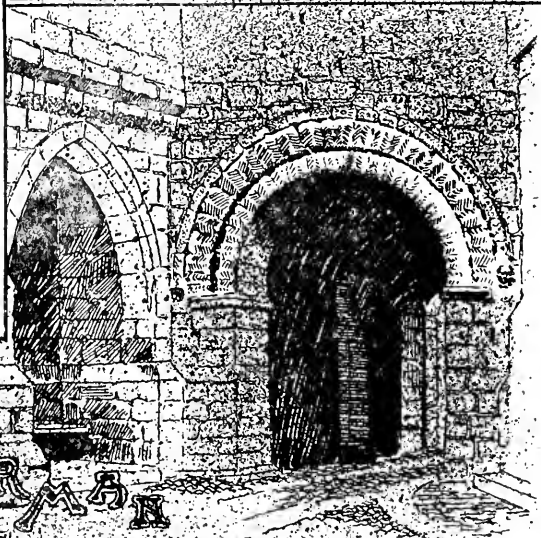


**THE  
DRAW  
WELL.**

avoided any personal participation in the great Catholic rising of the North, which strove to break the power of bluff King Hal, and was broken in its turn by the iron hand of Cromwell. But he was unfortunate in matrimony, and fell a victim to that interesting disease—a broken heart. The title remained in abeyance until the rule of Queen Mary, when the heir, Sir Thomas Percy, found his loyalty to Catholicism stand him in good stead, for the sanguinary queen exchanged the ban of attainder for the forfeited earldom.

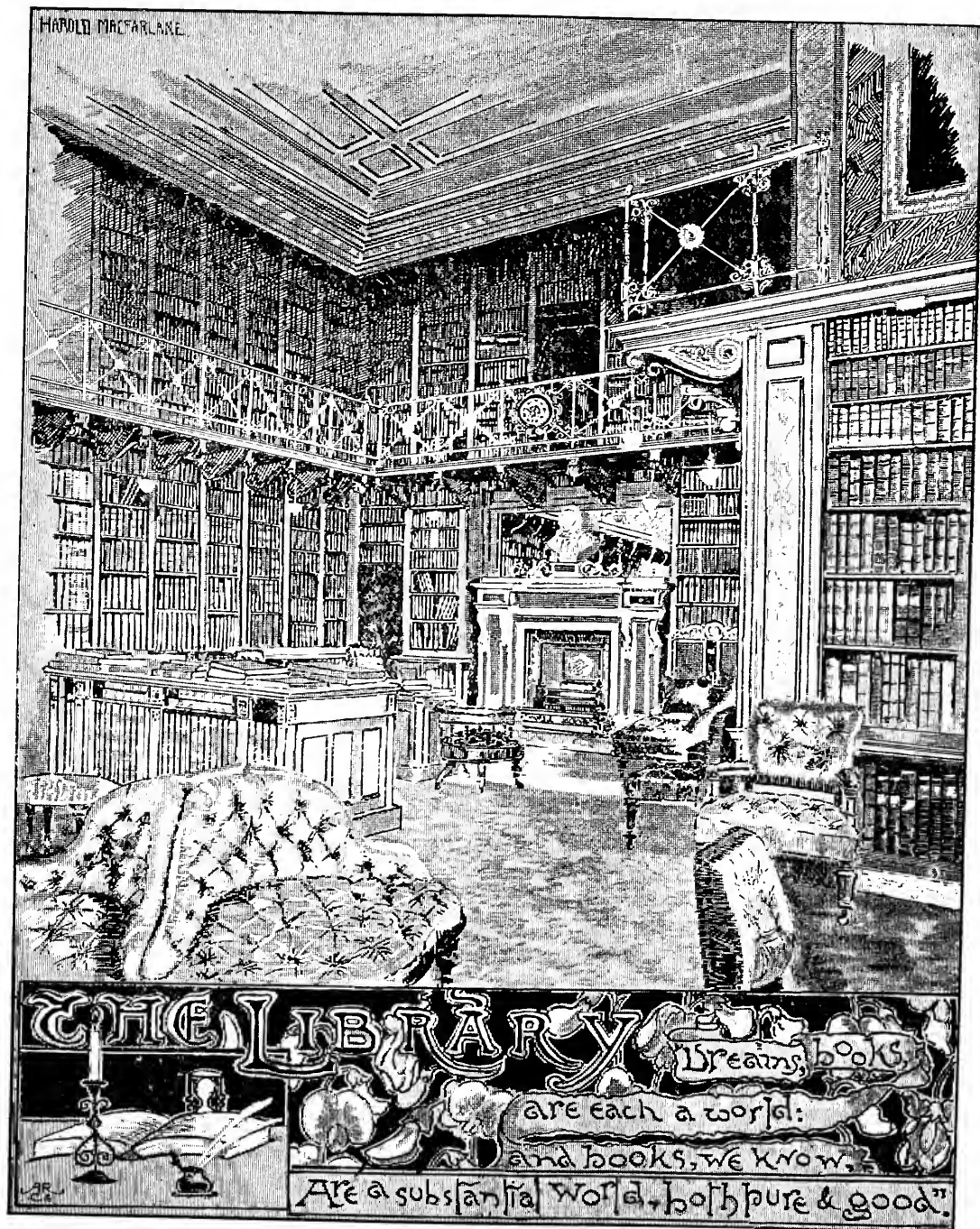
It was this same Thomas whose zealous faith led him, in the following reign, to champion the fallen fortunes of Marie Stuart. Together with my lord of Westmoreland, he boldly entered Durham Cathedral, tearing up the Bible

and Prayer-book and causing Mass once more to be said. The loss of his cause and consequent flight only preceded his death by the approved medium of the axe. His brother, the eighth Earl, was another victim to the charms of the Queen of Scots, but varied the monotony in the style of dying by probably committing suicide, the door of his chamber in the Tower being found barred inside and a pistol lying by his lifeless body. Religion again proved the undoing of that accomplished man of letters and science, Henry, ninth Earl, for he was considered to have had some connection with the Gunpowder Plot. The suspicion was enough for the rapacity of James, who forthwith tried the persuasive powers of the Star Chamber upon his victim. The result must have been more than gratifying to Solomon II., as it shaped itself into a fine of £50,000, and the trifling addition of life-incarceration in the Tower. After some years' delay, during which the estates were mulcted to the extent of £20,000, he was released and permitted to spend his declining days at the no less noteworthy family seat of Petworth, which Horace Walpole describes as "Percy to the backbone."



**A  
NORMAN  
GATEWAY.**





With the death of Jocelyn, eleventh earl, the male line is broken, and, in 1682, the vast domains pass to the House of Somerset with the heiress, Elizabeth Percy. Alnwick had long been deserted for the charms of Petworth. It was little better than a ruin when, in 1749, the comely form of Sir

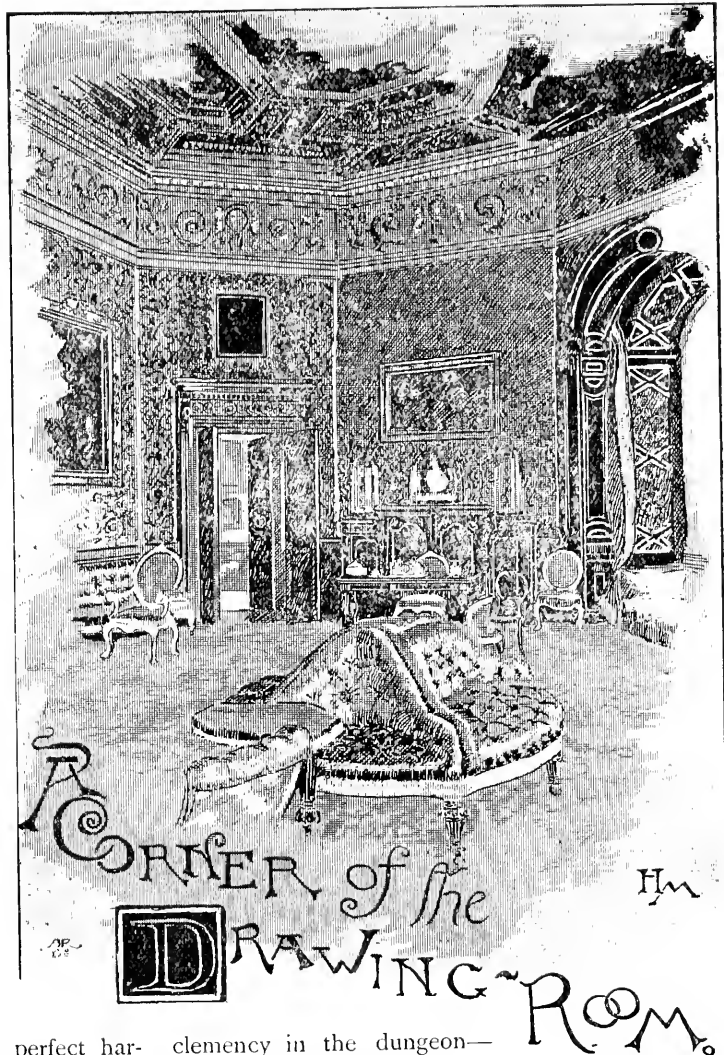
Hugh Smythson won the eye and heart of Lady Seymour, 'only child and heiress of Algernon, Duke of Somerset and Earl of Northumberland. We are told how the handsome Yorkshire baronet had unsuccessfully offered himself to another lady, and how the refusal had elicited an audible



avowal of surprise from the gentle Lady Elizabeth that so fine a man could meet with rejection. Sir Hugh, not being cursed with the "faint heart" that has proverbial ill-luck with fair ladies, made a bid for this noble prize, and of course won. He was raised to a dukedom in 1766, and was the direct progenitor of the present illustrious family, whose lineal claims have thus been set forth by Sir Bernard Burke:—

"Not more famous in arms than distinguished for its alliances, the House of Percy stands pre-eminent for the number and rank of the families which are represented by the present Duke of Northumberland; whose banner, consequently, exhibits an assemblage of nearly nine hundred armorial ensigns; among which are those of King Henry VII., of several younger branches of the Blood Royal of the Sovereign Houses of France, Castile, Leon, and Scotland, and of the Ducal Houses of Normandy and Brittany, forming a galaxy of heraldic honours altogether unparalleled."

To turn to the architectural side of the Castle, we find in this stupendous pile a curious blending of the fortress and the home. The perfect harmony of the two qualities is due to the genius of Duke Algernon, who, in the present century, concentrated the first talent of Europe upon the restoration of his feudal heirloom. The area of the building occupies some five acres of ground, the whole being surrounded by high loop-holed battlements, varied at intervals by towers and bastions. It is, perhaps, the best specimen of a Norman stronghold that we possess, the keep being relieved by turreted buildings and the addition of a fine gatehouse. The entrance from the quaint little town is through the massive Barbican, which still shows the places where stood the three iron-bound gates. This is the work of the first Percy, and remains to the present day a monument of impregnability. Within the gateway is a gloomy souvenir of our forefathers'



clemency in the dungeon—a dark little hole below the prison, devoid of light or ventilation, save what an iron-trap could afford. Peering down into the Cimmerian darkness, one seems to hear the weary moanings of the unlucky Scots who lingered out their last days there. From the battlements above, stone figures menace one with uplifted weapons, a form of ornamentation to be found on some of the Castles of the West. Also upon the walls may be seen devices, like the one on the Barbican, for fixing wooden protections to shield the inmates from the deadly aim of the invaders. They worked upon a roller and could either be raised as a covering or let down to hang flat. The old draw-well is another object of interest. Three indents in the wall mark the spot, the middle one of these being the mouth of the well.

Above this is a wooden axle, by means of which the buckets were filled and drawn up. A figure of St. James, from a raised niche, bestows a perennial blessing upon this generous source.

The greater part of Alnwick has twice been rebuilt in modern times. When Duke Hugh reaped his great matrimonial harvest in 1749, he set himself the stupendous task of repairing and adding to the dilapidated castle, the only sound part of which

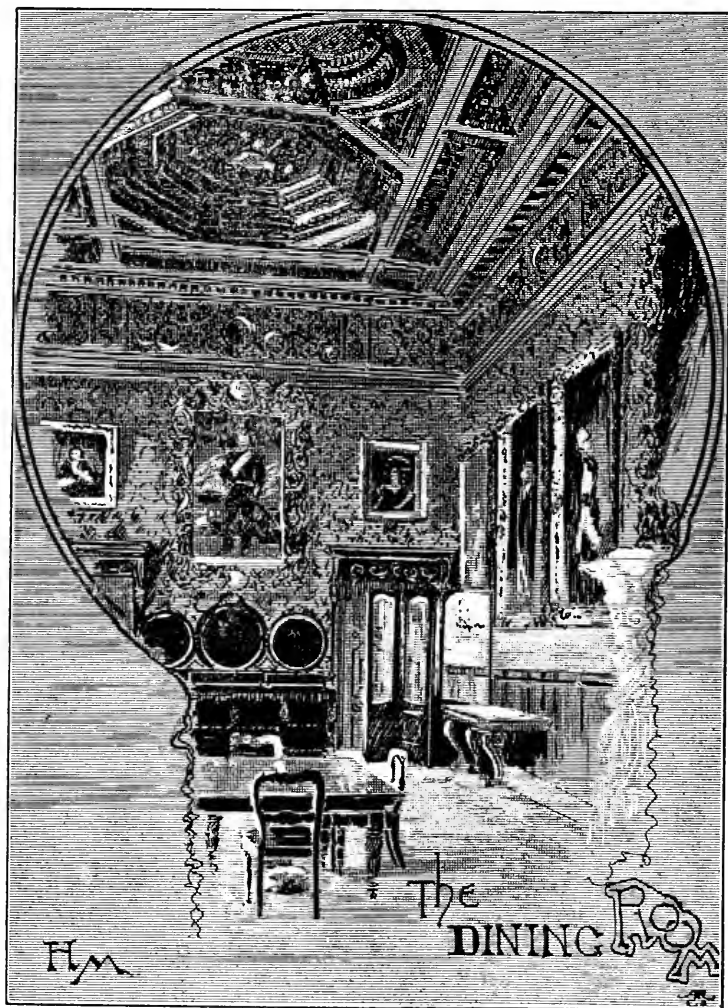
was being utilized for the benefit of the juvenile minds of the district. He was successful according to the ideas of the time, but the florid Georgian Gothic was an ill match for the simple grandeur of the older portions. The æsthetic tastes of "Algernon the Magnificent" perceived this, and wisely decided to commence the colossal undertaking once more *ab initio*. This sailor and scholar had a liberal idea of effecting his desire: a colony of skilled craftsmen were per-

manently located at the castle, under the supervision of such renowned masters as Luigi Canina and Giovanni Montiroli for the architecture, and Bulletti and John Brown for the wood carving. Outwardly, the ancient design was adhered to so strictly that few would now guess that

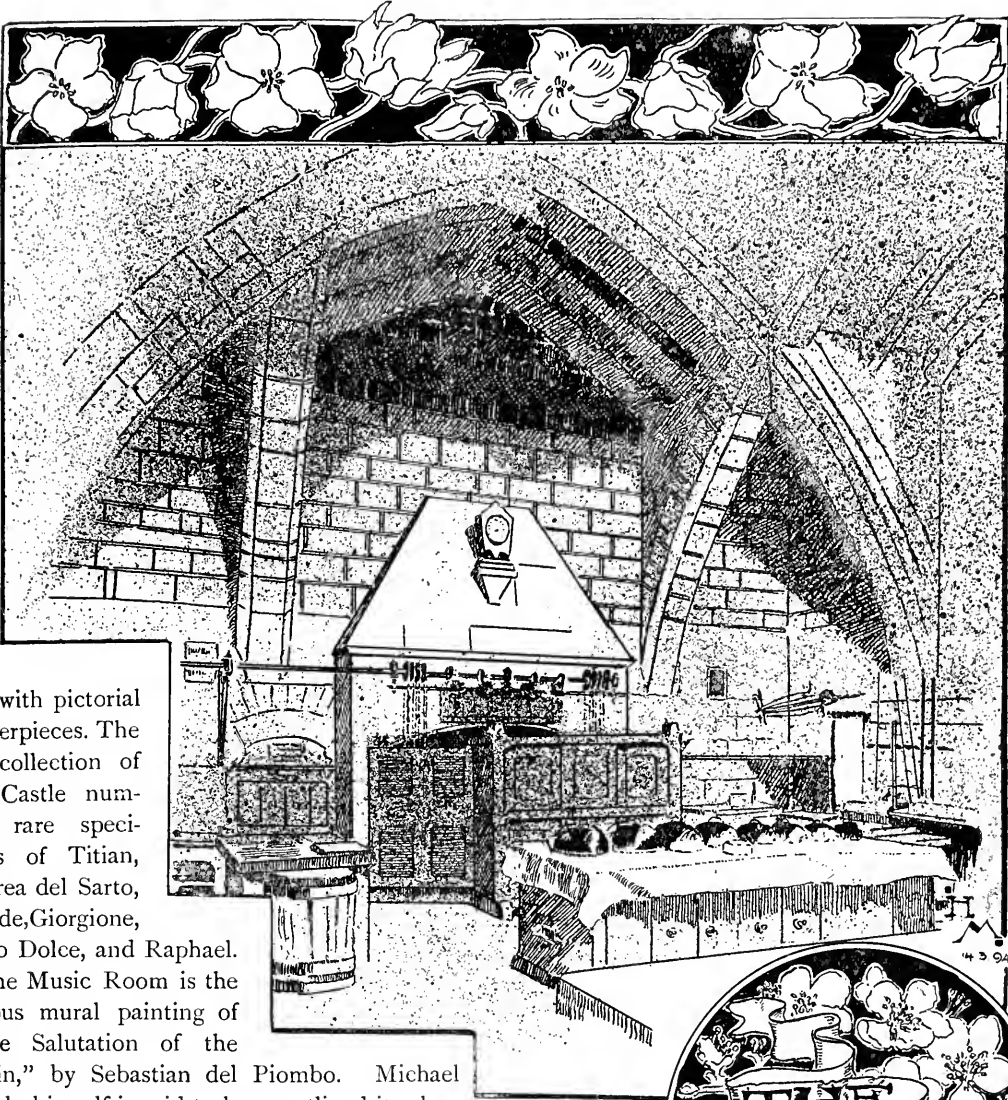
they were not looking upon a genuine untouched page from the Dark Ages. The only important addition was the Prudhoe Tower, raised above its brethren, with the artistic purpose of breaking the sameness of the general appearance.

Once inside this last and finest of Alnwick's towers, one forgets the oppressive majesty of the silent masonry in the consummate grace and elegance of a patrician English home. Let us

take a cursory glance at a few of the principal rooms, which do not awe one by their formal splendour, but speak as well of a refined and cultured family life. The great staircase, of Carrara and Parian marbles, sweeps grandly up to the Guard Chamber, with its floor of Venetian mosaic, and its pictures of Chevy Chase by Gotzenburg. From this room are reached the chapel and all the principal dwelling chambers. Everywhere is seen the wonderful wood-carving, the treasures of which are constantly being



added to. The Library is a finely-proportioned room, and contains some priceless illuminated manuscripts, among which special mention must be made of that *chef-d'œuvre*, the Service Book of Sherborne Abbey. The Music Room and Dining Room are also noble chambers, the former being



rich with pictorial masterpieces. The art collection of the Castle numbers rare specimens of Titian, Andrea del Sarto, Claude, Giorgione, Carlo Dolce, and Raphael. In the Music Room is the famous mural painting of "The Salutation of the Virgin," by Sebastian del Piombo. Michael Angelo himself is said to have outlined it, when his professional jealousy had been aroused by the prowess of Raphael.

The mammoth proportions of the kitchen now call for a word. The gargantuan chamber is said to have provided a repast for six hundred hungry Northerners, while in the crypt below are annually stored three hundred tons of coal. None too much, one would say, after a glance at the great fireplace, before which a complete ox has turned. My space does not allow of even reference to a tithe of the sights and curiosities that render the Castle almost unique. For instance, the Postern Tower is devoted to antiquities of the British, Roman, and Saxon periods, together with battle-field memorials from Flodden, Towton, Shrews-

bury, and others. In the Record Tower, "Algernon the Magnificent" has

stored the treasures of his Egyptian travels, while the Constable Tower records the raising of the Percy Volunteers, when the name of "Boney" was synonymous in nursery circles with "Bogey." In short, the only remark that I feel justified in adding is: when next you have a week to spare, go to Alnwick and realize its beauties for yourself: the feeble possibilities of the pen are altogether inadequate.





## Shall I, Wasting in Despair?

Words by GEORGE WITHER.

Music by RICHARD H. WALTHER.

*Moderato.*

VOICE.

PIANO.



Or make pale my cheeks with care, 'Cause an - o - ther's ro - sy are?

Be she fair - er than the

day, Or the flow - 'ry meads in May—.....  
*cres - cen - do.*

If she be not so for me, What care I, What care I,  
*f*

What care I how fair..... she be?



Great or good, or kind or fair,

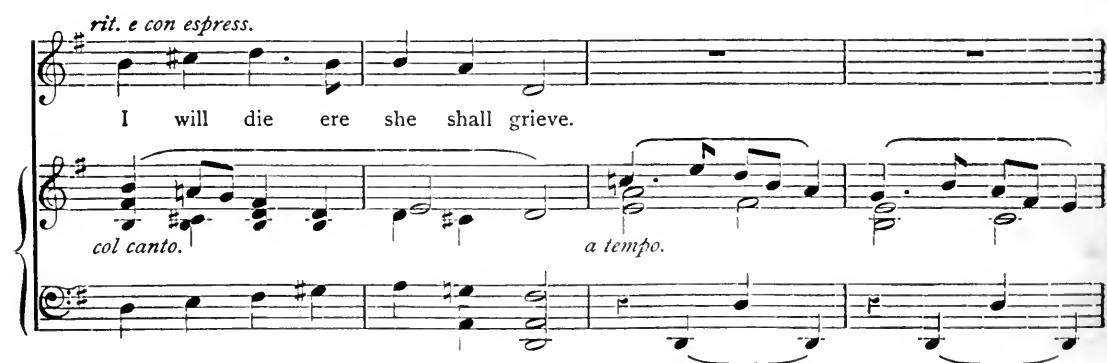


I will ne'er the more des - pair ; If she love me, this be - lieve,



*rit. e con espress.*  
I will die ere she shall grieve.

*col canto.* *a tempo.*



If she slight me when I woo, I can

scorn and let her go ;.....

*cres* - - - *cen* - - - do.

For if she be not for me, What care I, What care I,

*f*

What care I for whom..... she be?

# MUSIC BY GESTURES.

BY ALEXANDER H. JAPP, LL.D.

GOETHE, in his "Wilhelm Meister," was great upon the place music should hold in education. He was fain to introduce it everywhere. Some of his finest passages he wrote on this subject; and there are hints on it in his "Thoughts" and "Brevia." In the "Pædagogic Province," in "Meister," not only was music applied to almost everything, but it was associated with many signs. Wilhelm himself was by temperament prepared for entry there. "A hidden genius within him often seemed to inspire him with something rhythmic, so that in walking he moved constantly in time, and also seemed to perceive soft tones by which some song was accompanied."

"From the mountain heights descending,  
Down the slopes, the vale along,  
Hark! a wing-like flutter blending  
With a movement as of song."

What in "Wilhelm Meister" was vaguely and originally instinctive, Dr. Bridge would fain develop in children early, and that systematically, as the rudimentary basis of music teaching. Had Goethe lived to read Dr. Bridge's "Musical Gestures" we are fain to think that he would have been delighted, for here the elementary teaching of music is made musical, rhythmical, and associated with action. The pupils move or march to time as they learn their notes, and form their notes as they move to time. The best elements in the Kindergarten system are here very happily applied, so that even the youngest children could be exercised under a clever and enthusiastic teacher in such a manner that no tedium could be felt as over a book. Books indeed can be dispensed with on the pupils' part, and the whole in effect done by imitation of the movements of the teacher, or of more advanced sections, and the elements of music thus learned almost unconsciously. Dr. Bridge might indeed well take the motto from Coriolanus:

"In such business,  
Action is eloquence, and the eyes of the ignorant  
More learned than the ears."

It has already been successfully tried, for Dr. Bridge has tested its value in the case of his own

children and the boys of the Westminster Abbey choir. And what is the plan? our readers ask. It is simply drill, in which each musical sign is made by each pupil simultaneously and in obedience to the signal of the teacher. The class stands in line, the space between each individual being enough to allow of free extension of the arms. Here are the leading signs: (1) The whole note, or semibreve, is indicated by a circle formed with first finger and thumb of right hand, the other fingers being curved in line with the first; (2) the half-note, or minim, is indicated by the same sign, *plus* stem formed with the first finger of left hand; (3) the quarter note, or crotchet, is formed with closed right hand, and the stem with first finger of left hand; (4) the eighth note, or quaver (closed note), is formed by upright finger of left hand, and the crook by horizontal finger of right hand, touching base of former with its point; (5) sixteenth note, or semi-quaver, is formed by upright first finger of left, and two crooks formed by first and second fingers of right hand; (6) the thirty-second note, or demi-semi-quaver, is formed by first, second, and third fingers of right hand, touching at point stem of first finger of left hand; (7) the whole rest, or semi-breve rest, is formed by open right hand flat under the chin back upwards; (8) the half rest, or minim rest, is formed by the right hand flat on the top of the head; (9) the quarter rest, or crotchet rest, is formed by the right arm extended; (10) the eighth rest, or quaver rest, is the left arm extended; (11) the sixteenth rest, or semi-quaver rest, is both arms pointing to the left, one under the other; (12) the demi-semi-quaver rest is both arms and head pointing to the left; (13) the stave is formed by the left arm extended and fingers open to show spaces between; (14) the position of a note on the stave is indicated by the first finger of right hand touching left hand; (15) the treble clef is formed by left hand closed with second finger hanging down and curved, and right hand first finger and thumb meeting and resting on knuckle of left hand; (16) the whole step, or tone, is indicated by one pace forward with left foot, while the

right remains still ; (17) the half-step, or semi-tone, is indicated by the left foot being placed forward with heel touching inside of right foot, which remains still ; (18) the sharp is indicated by the first and second fingers of each hand being crossed in front of face, ladder-wise ; (19) the flat is indicated by a bow formed of first finger and thumb of right hand, a stem formed by first finger of left hand rising above it ; (20) the natural is formed by first finger and thumb of left hand at right angles brought into touch with the same fingers of right hand, but inverted ; (21) the single bar is shown by the right arm held up perpendicularly ; (22) the double bar by both arms held up perpendicularly ; (23) and the pause by both arms extended outwards and bent to form a semi-circle—the head bent forward is the dot in the semi-circle.

We have had the good fortune to see Dr. Bridge put his choir-boys through these exercises : and a very pretty sight it is. As we looked on them in their varied movements, so easy and so full of meaning, we said to ourselves : “Here is something better than the tonic sol-fa, and it may be destined to supersede it, for here there will be nothing to unlearn if the pupil advances to the more complicated themes ; and in these exercises you have a gentle and healthful athletic or drill, along with the most excellent method of impressing the principles of the art, with illustrations of the art itself. Dr. Bridge has here done all learners the utmost service.”

The various signs are, as near as can be, imitations of the written or printed notes. When these signs have been learned, “beating time” and “stepping the scale” may be practised ; and, after these are thoroughly mastered, any simple musical piece may be attempted. Dr. Bridge has himself produced a song with music which embodies the whole system—if we may speak so ; and in it

there is certainly something of humour, to which the pupil, however young, will soon awaken. Here are three verses :—

The shapes of the notes in the mind let us fix,  
’Tis easily done, for we need only six ;  
The whole-note, the half-note, the quarter-note, see,  
The others we know by their crooks, one, two, three.

The shape of a note shows the length of a sound,  
Notes open and closed and with crooks there are found ;  
Of whole notes and half-notes and quarters we tell,  
With eighth notes, sixteenth, thirty-second as well.

Rests are signs of silence,  
For every note there’s one ;  
And singers find them useful  
Ere all their breath is gone (!).

And so on through the stave, sharp, and flat, &c.

The music to this piece admirably matches the words. We cannot imagine an intelligent boy or girl not speedily getting interested in music by this means. Dr. Bridge modestly adds that this work is not intended to take the place of an ordinary complete manual of music, but only to prepare the way for it ; but it is surely no slight service to readers to have made the first steps attractive and easy, for beginnings are difficult, and tender youth is impatient of verbal explanations. Dr. Bridge shows his signs by actions, and wherever you can make children move and act in the process of learning you have introduced them to a land of pleasure ; and this the more especially if the scheme is capable of infinite variety, which Dr. Bridge’s scheme undoubtedly is. In a large Board School, say, how many combinations are possible ? He has not only done a great service to the teacher and to the pupils, but to parents and guardians throughout the world, for they themselves may easily become the teachers, and find it a pleasant task to take up at any moment the teacher’s work and carry it forward pleasantly and profitably. Dr. Bridge’s book is one of the Music Primers, published by Messrs. Novello, Ewer and Co.



# WAGNER'S DRAMA: "DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN."

## IV.—GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG."

By R. FARQUHARSON SHARP.

IN *Götterdämmerung* our interest is no longer claimed by the conflicts of superhuman powers, but by the passions of mortals and the working amongst men and women of the curse of the Ring.

The drama opens with a brief prologue, whose action takes place upon the mountain-top where Siegfried and Brünnhilde, since the latter's awakening, have lived a life of fullest joy and love. Brünnhilde has taught her hero out of the store of her magic wisdom, and the headstrong youth has become the glorious heroic man. But it is time for him to be doing; his fated mission must be fulfilled, and the momentous day has arrived when Siegfried must leave the arms of his bride and meet his destiny.

The Norns — three weird sisters who spin the golden rope of fate, and typify upon earth the enduring nature of the power of the old gods — have felt that their hour is at hand. The rope has broken: their wisdom tells them of the birth into the world of a new force that shall destroy the power of Wotan, and they have disappeared from earth to dwell for evermore, unapproachable, with their mysterious mother Erda.

At the break of day Brünnhilde bids farewell to Siegfried, sending him on his way with vows of love and constancy. Her parting gift to him is her horse Grane, which in her Valkyr days had borne her triumphantly through the air over storm and tempest, and even now will have the magic power of obeying Siegfried's every wish. To prove his deathless love for Brünnhilde and the certainty of his return to her, Siegfried places the Ring upon her hand, then rides away down the mountain-side upon his marvellous steed; while his bride, her home still girt with the rampart of flame, listens wistfully to the distant strains of his horn as her hero fares farther and farther from her.

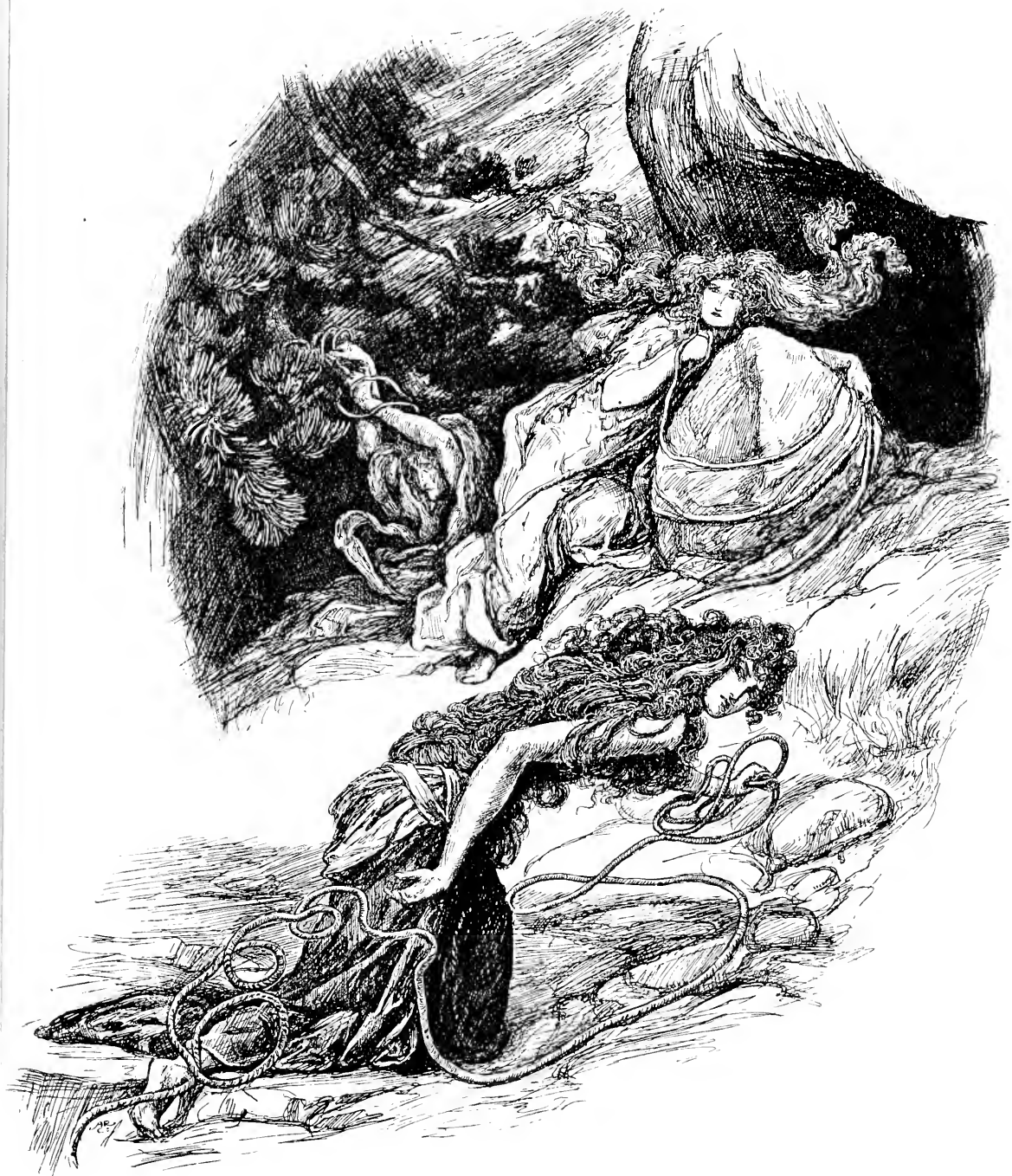
The scene changes to the halls of the Gibichungs on the banks of the Rhine, where dwells the mighty chieftain Gunther with his sister Gudrun

and his half-brother Hagen—the latter the son of the Nibelung Alberich, who, having forsworn all love, has begotten Hagen as a "hate-child," who shall use all his arts to wrest the Ring and its power from Siegfried.

As Mime had hoped that Siegfried would win the Ring from the dragon in order that himself might ultimately get possession of it by guile, so Hagen now devises a plot by which Gunther may rob Siegfried of it, and be robbed of it by Hagen in his turn. Knowing that it has been left in Brünnhilde's keeping, he tells Gunther of this wonderful maiden and urges him to seek her for his bride. But it is only a mightier man than he that may break through the fiery wall that guards her hiding-place; the fearless Siegfried is the only hero who can accomplish this and bring Brünnhilde to Gunther to wed.

Gunther angrily asks how he is to induce Siegfried, with the fame of whose exploits the whole land rings, to do such work for him. Hagen's reply is that Gutrune, Gunther's fair sister, must give Siegfried to drink of a love potion; once let him taste of it, and he will be overmastered by love for Gutrune and ready to do whatsoever she may ask. Moreover—and this Hagen alone knows—its magic power will kill in his mind all recollection of Brünnhilde, and of his love for her.

Hagen's words are scarcely spoken when the sound of Siegfried's horn is heard from the river. Asking which is Gunther, Siegfried, according to custom, challenges him to mortal combat, but his host receives him with words of kindness and bids him drink of the cup which Gutrune offers. As he puts it to his lips, Siegfried's eyes meet Gutrune's, and glow with the sudden passion that is engendered of the love philtre. Full of the desire to make her his own, Siegfried asks of Gunther whether he has a wife, and if this be she. To this Gunther, prompted by Hagen, replies that he is unwed, and that there is a maiden he would win but cannot, for she lies upon a rocky height girdled with flames through which a man must



THE NORNS.



THE HELM OF DECEIT.



dare to break before he can hope for Brünnhilde's love.

Siegfried has mechanically repeated Gunther's words, as if vaguely haunted by memories; but at the mention of Brünnhilde's name it is evident that the potion has done its work, and all remembrance of her is dead. No fire has any terror for him, he promptly asserts: he will be the man to carry off Brünnhilde and bring her back to Gunther as his bride—and, should he perform this service, he will claim Gutrune's hand for himself.

Having sworn an oath of brotherhood, the two men set out together upon their treacherous quest. Gunther is to accompany Siegfried to the foot of the mountain, where, by means of the magic Tarnhelm (the Wishing-Cap whose virtues Hagen has taught him) Siegfried is to take upon him the shape of Gunther, and so bring Brünnhilde down from her rocky height for Gunther himself to take back to his halls.

Meanwhile, as Brünnhilde is anxiously awaiting her hero's return, she hears, to her amazement, a Valkyr's call, and perceives Waltraute, one of her former Valkyr sisters, riding furiously over the clouds towards her. To Brünnhilde's eager questioning as to how she dared brave Wotan's wrath by coming to her, Waltraute impetuously replies that Brünnhilde may now, if she will, save all the gods from ruin. Wotan, she tells her amazed sister, has given up his fight against his doom. The powers of heaven have grown weak, the gods are grey and old, and Wotan himself sits with his shattered spear in Walhall, gloomily awaiting his end. But she has learnt from him that there may yet be one last hope, if Brünnhilde will give the Ring back to the Rhine-maidens, and so at the eleventh hour remove the curse.

It is to implore her to this that Waltraute has come, but in vain. Brünnhilde is no longer the Valkyr; the power of love has made a mortal woman of her, and she replies that the Ring was a gage of love from Siegfried and that none but he shall wrest it from her. His love, one glance from his eyes, is now of more worth to her than all the glory of Walhall and the gods. In despair, the Valkyr rides away upon the tempest; and as the storm clouds disperse, Brünnhilde once more hears the welcome sounds of Siegfried's horn as he ascends the mountain.

She rushes forward to welcome him, when her

joy is changed into a cry of terror as she sees a stranger advancing through the flames. With the Tarnhelm upon his head, Siegfried is now in the likeness of Gunther; and in the masterful advance of this man, and not the hero whom alone she deemed able to break through the fiery wall, Brünnhilde imagines that she sees a fresh proof of Wotan's undying anger towards her. In the hope of repulsing him by the invincible power of the Ring, she stretches out her finger towards the stranger, and bids him come no nearer. To her horror, she finds herself powerless. After a fierce struggle, he wrenches the Ring from her finger and claims her as Gunther's bride. She sinks helpless and despairing to the ground as Siegfried turns to bear her back according to his oath to Gunther.

The second act brings us back to Gunther's halls, where Hagen is moodily waiting for his lord's return. As day dawns, he is roused by Siegfried, who, having delivered over Brünnhilde to Gunther at the foot of the mountain, has, by the power of his magic accoutrements, been borne back in a moment's time to the banks of the Rhine. He is greeted by Hagen and Gutrune, to whom he relates how he carried off Brünnhilde from her retreat, and bids them prepare for the return of Gunther and his bride. Hagen spies a sail in the distance, and summons Gunther's men from far and near to welcome their chief. Amid the jubilant clash of arms and the shouts of the warriors Gunther arrives, followed by Brünnhilde, weak and faltering, her eyes cast in shame to the ground.

Her amazement at seeing Siegfried is changed into horror when she hears from his lips that Gutrune, who stands by his side, is to wed him. Gazing into his eyes, she sees there no gleam of recognition, none of the fire of love. Suddenly she spies the Ring upon his finger, and angrily asks Gunther how he allowed this man to take it from him, imagining as she does that it was Gunther himself who had torn it from her hand.

Gunther's denial that the Ring had ever been in his possession convinces her that some treachery has been at work. Her scorn for Siegfried, whom she deems to have forsaken her love for another's, breaks forth in a proud appeal to him to remember his troth to her and their days of love together. The conflict of passions, stirred by the success of Hagen's crafty device, now reaches its climax.



SIEGFRIED AND THE RHINE MAIDENS.

Gunther, whom Hagen has kept in ignorance of Siegfried's original winning of Brünnhilde, is persuaded that his new blood-brother has proved unfaithful to the oath they swore, and has won from Brünnhilde the joys of love which should have been his; while Siegfried, robbed of all memory by the fatal drink, rebukes Brünnhilde for her wild protestations of their past love, and asks her how she can be so unmindful of her own honour as to suggest that he has played Gunther false.

Brünnhilde calls down the wrath of heaven upon him for his treachery, and, when he has withdrawn with Gutrune, seeks for means of avenging herself. Here is the opportunity for which Hagen has been waiting. Both he and Gunther declare that Siegfried must die if he has been unfaithful, and Hagen is ready for the deed. There is to be a boar hunt on the morrow; to that they will accompany Siegfried, and, under pretext of some accident, he shall be killed. Brünnhilde has by her magic arts rendered Siegfried invulnerable, save in his back, for that she knew he never would turn towards his foes. It is there that Hagen must strike. Gunther protests against his sinister design, reminding him of the brotherhood between him and his guest; but Hagen declares that Siegfried has broken that by the unfaithfulness to which Brünnhilde testifies, and, moreover, that there is but one thing which can wipe out the shame which Gunther feels at the unmanly device by which Brünnhilde was won, and that is Siegfried's death.

The last stage of the drama is reached. The shadow of the curse of the Ring is hovering over Siegfried, who goes, light-hearted and careless, to the boar hunt, where a treacherous doom awaits him. Having lost his companions in the chase, he has wandered to the banks of the river; and there, to his astonishment, he hears the song of the three Rhine-maidens, who call to him entreating him to give them the Ring which is upon his finger, and so save himself from a terrible fate. To their warning, that if he will not cast the Ring from him he must die that day, he replies laughingly that their dismal prophecies do not frighten him, and that he fought too hard to win the Ring to be willing to give it up now.

With a last cry of warning the Rhine-maidens swim down into the depths of the river, and, as they disappear, the distant shouts of his fellow-hunters meet Siegfried's ear.

Hagen and Gunther approach with the rest, and a halt is made in the cool shade of the river bank. Siegfried jestingly tells Gunther that he has been warned that he should die that day, but protests that it must be indeed a terrible chase that offers dangers more serious than those he has encountered. Thereupon Hagen begs of Siegfried to tell them of his adventures, handing him at the same time a horn of wine into which he has squeezed the juice of an herb whose magic property is to restore to Siegfried the memory of his past.

Siegfried tells them of Mime and his upbringing in the forest, of the fight with the dragon, his wonderful understanding of the birds' voices, and his quest of his bride. At last he comes to the tale of the awakening of Brünnhilde, and here his words suddenly arouse Gunther to a sense of the ill he has unwittingly wrought. A question to Hagen is trembling on Gunther's lips when, as two ravens fly out of a bush and circle over Siegfried's head, Hagen enquires of Siegfried whether he can understand these raven's croakings. Siegfried starts up and gazes after the birds, turning his back towards Hagen, who, with a savage cry, plunges his spear into him. Gunther, whose eyes have been opened by Siegfried's tale, seeks to arrest the murderous arm, but too late. After a vain effort to crush Hagen with his shield, Siegfried falls dead, breathing a last message of love to Brünnhilde.

Hagen has rushed away from the wrath and contempt of his fellows; and slowly and sorrowfully Gunther and his men prepare to carry the dead hero back to the halls where wait the woman he has loved and the woman who loves him.

Thither Hagen has sped, to announce to Gutrune, with cruel irony, the return of her lord. No sooner has Gunther arrived with the body of Siegfried than Hagen claims the Ring, which is on the dead man's finger, as his by right of conquest. Gunther seeks to prevent his taking it, and a fight ensues, in which Hagen kills his adversary. Advancing to the bier, Hagen is on the point of siezing the Ring when, to the horror of all, the dead hand that wears it is raised in a solemn and threatening manner.

By this token (a variant of the old superstition that, at the approach of the murderer, a murdered man's wounds would bleed afresh) Hagen is



SIEGFRIED'S FUNERAL MARCH.

known to have treacherously killed the hero. Gutrune realises the terrible results of the potion which her own hand had administered, while to Brünnhilde there comes, too late, the knowledge of Hagen's treachery and the innocence of her dead hero.

This is the supreme moment for Brünnhilde, the triumph of self-sacrificing love. Remembering the words of Waltraute, that the world could know no happiness till it were rid of the curse of the Ring, and determined that death shall not divide her from her love, she bids the men prepare a funeral pyre upon which Siegfried's body shall be laid. Taking the Ring from his finger she places it upon her own, and, with her own hand flings a blazing torch upon the pyre, which bursts into flame.

Leading in her horse, Grane, which had served Siegfried so well, she bids it do him a last service; and, after an exultant appeal to Fate to let the fatal curse disappear before the power of Love, with a call of greeting to Siegfried, she leaps

upon the horse, and with it dashes into the midst of the fire.

The flames rise higher and higher, seeming to threaten the very halls. Suddenly they sink, and the waters of the Rhine are seen to overflow its banks and rush over the pyre. Upon the surface of the waves ride the three Rhine-maidens, one of whom exultingly holds the Ring aloft. At the sight of them Hagen, with a wild cry, throws away shield and spear, and plunges into the waters which overwhelm him. As the waves retreat, a lurid glow is seen in the sky. Walhalla is burning; the doom of the gods has come, and Wotan and his peers are perishing as Destiny had decreed.

So ends the fatal working of the Nibelung's curse, which has overtaken all whose lust for power has led them to covet the unrighteous possession of the Ring. Wotan's sin is expiated to the full, love and self-sacrifice have overcome the powers of darkness, and a new and higher order of things has begun in the world.

## VOICES AT THE FERRY.

THE path to the Ferry goes winding down  
Through pine-wood alleys and corn-fields  
brown;  
And strange low sounds still haunt the air  
As once when, a child, I wandered there,  
And over the water wide,  
In the summer noon, I cried  
To the fairy-folk on the further side:  
"Come over, come over to me!"

And later, in girlhood's golden days,  
How oft by the Ferry I stood at gaze,  
Till the scythes were still in the fairy  
grass,  
And I watched for my lover at eve to pass.  
And down by the haunted stream,  
In the mellow moonlight gleam,  
I broke with a whisper my own love-dream—  
"Come over, come over to me!"

Then mine was the portion of wedded years;  
But new-found rapture was quenched in tears,  
And over the Ferry they bore away  
The dear companion of yesterday.  
But still, in the even-glow,  
I call to him, soft and low,  
And Echo replies, in the voice I know—  
"Come over, come over—to me!"

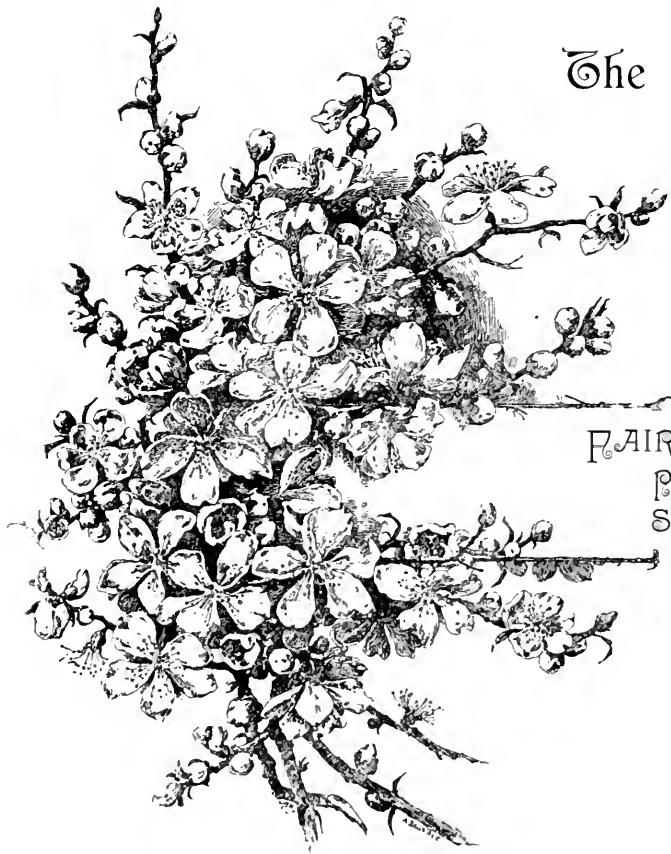
HORACE G. GROSER.

# The Flower-War

## of the Fairies,

BY

WILL FOSTER.



FAIRIES of the Sun and Moon,

Pricked by ancient rivalry,

Scout and skirmish, chase and fly,

O'er our world from March to June.

Gold their colours are, and white.

Every flower that Spring calls forth,

Disenchanting from the night

Of old Winter, needs must choose

One of these divinest hues,

Lest they shame their elfin birth.

So each fairy crew contends,

Zealous for its war-like ends !







Soon on either side are set,  
 Armed with spear, or helm, or shield,  
 Every flower of wood and field,

Save the modest violet,  
 The hyacinth and speedwell blue,  
 Still to their sky-banner true.  
 The celandine, alas, to tell !  
 Is the turn-coat of the dell,  
 But though he borrow stripes of white  
 He dare not doff his gold coat quite.

Anemones and snowdrops pale  
 Seize the wood and fill the dale,  
 But daffodils their flags unfurl  
 In many a long gold-streaming curl,  
 And primrose armies mustering fast  
 Turn the doubtful hour at last.  
 How the Moon-men in dismay  
 Bribe the orchards far and wide,  
 The blackthorn and the scented may ;  
 But the buttercups take side  
 'Gainst their high down-looking neighbours,  
 And with mighty god-like labours  
 Spread their shining tents of gold  
 Over all the fields. Alas !  
 The simple daisy, never bold,  
 Fears with either side to hold,  
 And fain would hide beneath the grass ;  
 But when she must appear in sight  
 Her heart is gold, her vesture white.





Who shall triumph, ne'er a Ray,  
 Howsoever wise, dare say,  
 Till the dandelions all,  
 With their bold shields  
     flaming bright,  
 Rush into the mid-most  
     fight.  
 Cause their doughtiest  
     foes to fall :  
 Then the Sun-Rays  
     wild with glee,  
 Fill the air with  
     mockery.

How, indeed, the  
     cause is lost !  
 Ah, but what is this  
     pale light,  
 Stealing like a winter frost  
 Through the silent fields at  
     night ?  
 What strange music on the  
     breeze  
 Of twanging bows and march-  
     ing feet !



Little Moon-men on the beat,  
 Troll they such blithe melodies ?  
 Ah, how oft must Time repeat  
 " Sure success is sure defeat ! "

When the Day un-  
     rolls her blue,  
 Where are all  
     those shields of  
     gold,  
 Lifted late by war-  
     riors bold ?  
 Every shield is  
     stricken through  
 With fairy arrows  
     silvery white ;  
 Not a field hath  
     stood the fight !

Every hill wears banners new  
 And little moons, revolving true  
 In emerald skies, orb day and  
     night.

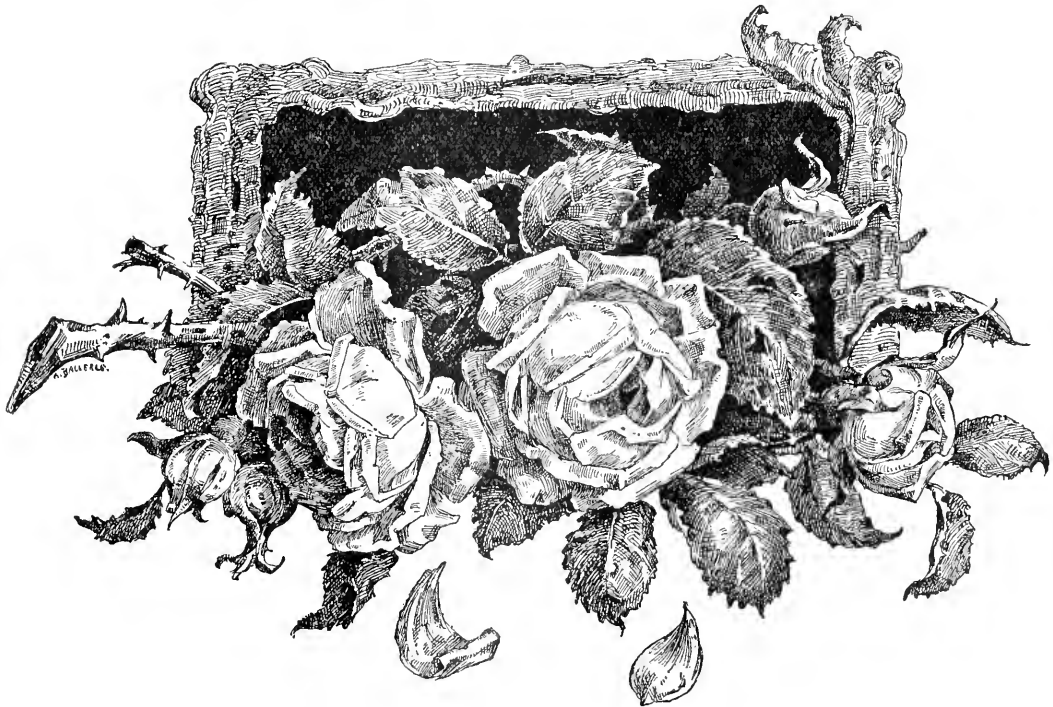
O the shouting and dismay  
 When the Sun-Rays wake at  
     morn !

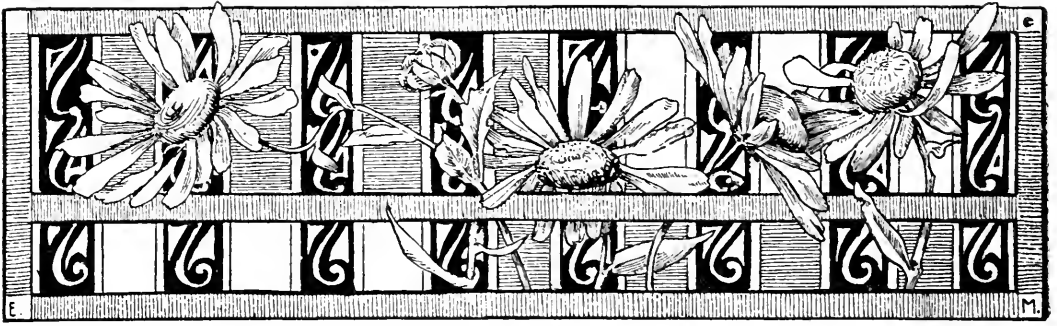




O the questionings forlorn,  
And the cries of "Lack-a-day!"  
But the Moon-men, being wise—  
Knowing still their numbers least—  
Offer truce and spread a feast  
For their ancient enemies.

To that feast are bidden all:  
Bird and bee and insect small,  
And the flowers themselves do wait  
On their lords in robes of state.  
Long on dishes rare they feed,  
Sip bright dew and foaming mead;  
And with many a toast and quip  
Pledge eternal fellowship,  
Till their drowsy eyelids fall,  
And by sweet and joyous hap  
Some fair flower's silken lap  
Spreads a couch for one and all.





## WHITE TURRETS.

AN OUTLINE.

BY MRS. MOLESWORTH,

*Author of "Carrots"; "The Palace in the Garden"; "A Charge Fulfilled";  
"The Red Grange"; "Studies and Stories," etc., etc.*

### CHAPTER III.

AT THE DINNER TABLE.

"NOT very far," said Celia, smiling, and colouring a little. "I was very much entertained by watching all the people round the table, and perhaps I was thinking mostly of poor old Len."

Eric looked across in young Maryon's direction.

"Why do you say '*poor* old Len?' he enquired. "I think he's quite happy. Mrs. Fancourt seems to be drawing him out beautifully."

Celia glanced at her companion doubtfully.

"Do you really think so?" she asked, "or are you saying it to—to draw *me* out?"

"I really think so, and I don't need to draw you out," he replied. "I know exactly what you mean about Lennox, and—you needn't pity him. It will be all right."

"Oh, I am afraid not," said Celia. "I'm afraid it will never come right. I didn't know you knew about it, but as you do—no," and her voice dropped almost to a whisper, "Winifred will *never* care for him. I see it more and more, and now she is thinking of all sorts of things—quite differently, you know."

"Indeed," said Eric, raising his eyebrows in enquiry, "do you mean—is there—some other more fortunate person in the field?"

"No, no, not that at all," said Celia. "Winifred has much higher ideas than most girls. She wants

to make a path for herself—to feel that she is doing something with her life—and she must be right. Why should girls be condemned to do and be nothing? A young man without a profession is always considered the greatest mistake. Why should women be forced into leading idle and useless lives?"

"They never should be," said Eric, "I quite agree with you. But there are considerations: if a girl *does* marry, you will allow that she finds her work cut out for her—her vocation or profession or whatever you like to call it. And I do not think any woman has a right to cast herself adrift from the *chances* of marrying, so to say; she should allow herself fair play."

Celia gave her head the tiniest of tosses.

"Winifred does not want to marry, and she is old enough to judge," she said. "I don't deny—well, honestly, I should have been very happy if she had married Lennox, that is to say, if she could have cared for him. It would have pleased a good many people, and—did you ever hear the legend of White Turrets?" she went on, dropping her voice, and looking half frightened at herself.

"No," said Eric, with interest. "I've heard something about its being haunted, like nearly all very old houses, but I never heard of any legend."

"Ah well, there is one. It and the ghost are mixed up together," said Celia, still in a slightly awestruck tone. "It—*she* is supposed to be the

spirit of an ancestress of ours, who was cruelly treated because she had no son. She had two or three daughters, and she died soon after the last was born, and she left a sort of a curse—no,” with a little shudder, “I don’t like to call it that. It was more like a——”

“A prophecy,” suggested Eric.

“Yes,” said Celia, her face clearing, “it was more like that. It was to warn her descendants that the luck, so to say, should run in the female line, and that whenever a man was the owner of the place, the Maryons might——”

“Look out for squalls,” Eric could not resist.

Celia glanced at him, half indignantly.

“If you’re laughing at me,” she said, “I won’t tell it you.”

“I beg your pardon, I do really,” he said, penitently. “It was only that I did not like to see you looking quite so solemn about it.”

“I can’t help it,” said the girl, simply. “It always makes me a little frightened, though I know it’s silly. Winifred gets quite vexed if it is mentioned. She says it is contemptible nonsense. Louise believes it, but she is so good, it doesn’t frighten her. Still, for other reasons, we seldom allude to it. It has come *so* true, over and over again: I could tell you lots of things. Papa, you know, has had heaps of trouble. Poor papa, just think what a life of endurance his is! So you see if—if Winifred could have married Lennox (he is our second cousin, you know), it would have done so well—keeping the old name, and yet her being the owner of the place.”

“I see,” said young Balderson.

“Or even if she could have been a more ordinary sort of girl, content to settle down at home,” Celia went on, “for,” and here the frightened look came over her face again, “there’s more in the legend: the worst luck of all is to come if a woman of the family deserts her post. And once a rather flighty great-grand-aunt of ours *did*—she couldn’t live at home because she thought it a dull part of the country, and she came up to London, and travelled about to amuse herself, and all *sorts* of things happened.”

“Did burglars break in, or was the house burnt down, or—?” began Eric, but Celia interrupted him.

“You are laughing at me again,” she said reproachfully. “No, it was worse than that. Her

son turned out very badly and was killed in a duel, and her daughter died, and they lost a lot of money, and in the end it came to our grandmother, you see, whose husband took the name Maryon. But the family has never been so well off since.”

“And in the face of all these warnings, your sister persists—no, what is it she wants to do or not to do?” said the young man, looking rather perplexed. “The ghost can’t bully her for not marrying a man she doesn’t care for, surely? I thought better of ghosts than that!”

“No, it’s not that. It is that she wants to leave home and make a career for herself. And I admire her for it. That’s why we were so pleased to come here, we want to find out about a lot of things.”

Eric looked really grave.

“Why is your sister not content to stay at home?” he enquired. “Even if she were a man, there are men whose vocation it is, not to have a profession, whose work and duties are there, all ready for them. Is it not much the same with Miss Maryon, considering your father’s illness, and all there must be to look after?”

His hearer seemed surprised and almost startled. These are aspects of our daily life, ways of looking at our surroundings with which we might long have been familiar: commonplace, matter-of-fact reflections, requiring no special genius of discrimination to call them forth, which, nevertheless when put into words by an outsider, strike us with extraordinary effect. Almost do they come upon us with the force of a revelation.

So was it just now with Celia Maryon. As she took in the full bearing of young Balderson’s observations, she felt more and more struck by them. She looked up in his face with a strange cloud in her eyes, and Eric himself felt surprised. He imagined that he had somehow or other hurt or offended her.

“I beg your pardon,” he began, “if—of course I would not be so presumptuous as to suppose I could judge of the circumstances.”

Celia smiled. She would be true to her colours at any costs, and her colours meant her sister Winifred. The truth was that she was at a loss how to reply; she had never looked at things in this light before. She wanted to think it all over quietly by herself, but she was not going to allow this to any one else.

"No," she said, "of course you can't judge. You don't know Winifred, or what there is in her. My other sister, Louise, is the home one. She is not nearly so clever as Winifred, but she does pretty well. The bailiff isn't bad, though I'm afraid he's going to leave, and old Mr. Peckerton, the lawyer, comes over if he's wanted. Things go on in a groovey, old-fashioned way, but, oh no, Winifred could never find her life-work in these directions."

And again Celia smiled, a superior, almost contemptuous little smile this time. Her own words half persuaded herself that she had been foolish to be so impressed by the young man's scarcely conscious remonstrance.

"Ah, of course I can't pretend to judge," he repeated, and the modesty of his tone encouraged her to say a little more, to stifle her own misgivings as much as to keep up her sister's dignity.

"Winifred is intended for a larger life altogether," she said. "And there are three of us at home. People are beginning to see the facts about women's lives, differently. Why should we be condemned to trivial idleness? Look how some have thrown off the trammels! There is Miss Norreys, for instance. Could you imagine *her* spending her life in ordering legs of mutton and darning stockings?"

"No," said Eric simply, "I couldn't. And I don't think any woman's life need be or should be so dull and narrow. But still, Hertha Norreys is not a fair example. She has a gift, an undoubted gift. I think its greatness is scarcely yet recognised by herself or others; perhaps it never will be. But still she has not ignored it. She felt she had a talent and she was bound to cultivate it, and she has done so. In her case there was no choice."

Celia looked interested.

"I am glad you allow *that*, at any rate," she said, and glancing at her, the young man almost fancied that she blushed a little. "Of course I think cleverness like Winifred's a gift, but I can understand ordinary people not looking upon it as if she had a great talent for music, or—or painting. It is easier when you have the one distinct power. Now there is Lady Champion. Your mother seems to think her so talented, but she has not concentrated her talents."

"No," said Eric drily, "she certainly has not."

"And," pursued Celia, "she is married. She shouldn't have married if she wanted to *be* something."

"But perhaps she didn't, or, at least, not what you call 'something.' She thinks herself very much 'something' or 'somebody,' and her marriage has certainly not stood in her light."

Celia hesitated.

"You don't like Lady Champion?" she said, abruptly.

"Oh yes, I do," he replied, lightly. "She's by no means a bad sort—of woman," he went on, hastily. Celia was not the kind of girl to whom it seemed natural to talk slang. "But she wouldn't have been half what she is if she hadn't married. The best of her, in my humble opinion, comes out as a wife. I like to see her with her husband. She recognises his superiority."

"Oh dear," thought Celia, "what a man's way of putting it!"

"For he really is a very first-rate fellow in his own line. And she is not a genius, though she is—oh yes! she is—clever, though sometimes she makes herself just a little ridiculous."

Celia did not speak. This was again a new light to her. She felt confused. She had pictured Lady Champion quite differently, somehow, and she felt sure Winifred had done the same, pitying her for having married and thus rashly clipped her wings.

"She—Lady Champion—admires Miss Norreys exceedingly," said Celia, after a little silence. "That should be a bond between you, for I can see you admire her exceedingly, too."

Eric looked somewhat surprised. The young girl had more perception than he had given her credit for.

"Yes," he said, "I do. I admire her very much indeed. As an artist I place her more highly than might be generally thought reasonable, and, as a woman, yes, I admire her too, and respect her, except for——"

"What?" asked Celia, eagerly.

"I cannot tell you," he answered. "I was going to say that, as a woman, there is one direction in which I cannot admire her. But I cannot explain more fully, and perhaps I may have misjudged her. She is one in whom it would be difficult to believe there existed any of the weaknesses that one finds in smaller characters."

This was high praise. Celia's interest in Hertha grew with every word.

"I wish I knew her," she said, earnestly. "I should so like to meet her."

Her words reached the ears of her companion on the other side. Mr. Fancourt was beginning to feel as if he had had about enough of the neighbour—a talkative woman of forty or thereabouts, well up in the topics of the day, and of his own small section of the world in particular on his left, whom hitherto he had deliberately chosen in preference to the pretty young creature on his right. And now, with the calm "insouciance" of an experienced diner-out, he turned to Celia.

"There must be more in her than I suspected," he said to himself. "She seems to have succeeded in making Balderson talk, and he can be pretty heavy in hand when it doesn't suit him to be lively."

"You are speaking of Miss Norreys, are you not?" he asked. The name had caught his attention, and, when Celia bowed in response—"Yes, she is charming," he went on. "It is curious: I have found myself thinking of her two or three times during dinner. There is a certain something which I cannot define, which reminds me of her in that girl on the other side of the table—nearer our host—yes," as he followed Celia's eyes, "the girl next but one to my wife. You know *her*, Mrs. Fancourt, by sight—in pale green? No?" (he thought everybody knew his wife.) "Ah well, you know her now."

"She is very pretty," said Celia, simply.

"I cannot contradict you," he said, with a well-pleased smile, which made Celia think that, after all he must be rather a nice man—she liked husbands who thought their wives very pretty—and disposed her to question the truth of Winifred's sweeping assertion that conjugal affection was never to be found among "smart" people. "But," continued Mr. Fancourt, "look at the girl I mentioned—the girl in black. Do you see the slight something—scarcely resemblance—about her, which recalls Miss Norreys?"

In her turn Celia now smiled with pleasure.

"She is my sister," she replied. "She will be delighted when she hears what you say. No, I don't think it would have struck me that there was any likeness. But I daresay there *is* some likeness in character. My sister is very self-reliant and—

and—dauntless. And I should think there is something of that about Miss Norreys."

Having found a topic of interest, the rest of the dinner passed pleasantly enough, and Mr. Fancourt felt that doing his duty had not been the arduous task he had anticipated.

But it was her conversation with Eric Balderson which left its mark on Celia's mind.

"Oh Celia," said Winifred, when she managed to get her sister to herself for a moment in the drawing-room, "I feel in a new world. Mr. Sunningdale has been talking to me so delightfully, so *perfectly*. All my intuitions about the larger, wider life I should find in London are being realised. How narrow our small home-world seems in comparison! I told Mr. Sunningdale something of what I am hoping to do, and I can see he sympathised in my longing to throw off the narrow trammels we have been brought up in. People here have such much wider ideas!"

"You must have made friends very quickly," said Celia.

In her tone there was not the complete and responsive sympathy which she was, as a rule, eagerly ready to give to her sister. She could not help it. A slight chill of doubt, of questioning of the perfect wisdom of Winifred's theories had been, though unintentionally, cast over her. But the elder Miss Maryon was too excited and enthusiastic to perceive it, and this, Celia was glad to see. For after all, the faintest idea of disagreement with Winifred's opinions or judgment was extraordinary and unnatural to her.

"Yes," said Winifred, "we did. But it does not need time to make friends when people are sympathetic. Mr. Sunningdale has evidently thought out all the great questions of the day about women most thoroughly."

She looked so bright and happy, so handsome and almost brilliant that her younger sister gazed in loving admiration.

"Dear Winifred," she said to herself. "No wonder Mr. Sunningdale or Mr. Anybody admires her when she looks like that. I do feel sorry for dear old Lennox though."

Poor Mr. Sunningdale! Much had been credited to him which he would have been greatly astonished to hear of. He was, as has been said, a kind-hearted and eminently good-natured man, a man too who not only had a special line of distinction

but was above the smallness of being ashamed of talking about what he really understood. And Winifred Maryon was certainly intelligent enough to be a good listener, all of which explains the two having "got on so well." It was not, to do her justice, till towards the end of dinner that Winifred ventured to allude to her aspirations. And the great man, gratified as even great men can be, by the enthusiastic admiration—or veneration—in the girl's bright eyes, listened—how could he have done less?—to her confidences, with here and there a word or smile of kindly, half amused encouragement. Though truth to tell, the subject matter of these same confidences, if it did not go in at one ear to come out at the other, left but the vaguest and most fleeting impression behind it.

"Pretty girl—handsome rather than pretty—intelligent, too, but rather bitten by the advanced ideas of the day. She'll settle down when she's married," was his commentary upon her to his hostess. "An heiress, did you say? All the better, if she falls into good hands."

And if Mrs. Balderson had begun to build air-castles as to the possible consequences of her introduction—Winifred being, as she expressed it, "just the sort of girl to prefer a man a good deal older than herself"—they speedily fell to the ground. Mr. Sunningdale had a history: the not uncommon one of an adored girl-wife dead almost before he had realised she was his. And, despite the cynicism which many declared lay beneath his surface good-nature, there was something deeper down still. He was not the man to dream of a second marriage.

Nor, as we know, were Miss Maryon's ideas likely to turn the least in such "commonplace" directions.

The results of this first taste of London society were, however, to all appearance eminently satisfactory. Winifred, as she bade her kind hostess good-night, was profuse in her thanks for the delightful evening she had spent. And if Celia's pretty eyes had a slight shadow over them it could only have been that she was a little tired, thought the good woman.

"You took care of her at dinner, I hope, Eric?" she said to her son, who had been known to be afflicted with fits of absence on social occasions of the kind.

"Oh dear, yes. We got on capitally, like a

house on fire," he replied, cordially. "I was so much obliged to you for giving me Celia to look after instead of her sister. I can't stand that other girl, and I think Lennox a lucky fellow to be out of it."

"It is to be hoped he will come to see it in that light himself," said Mrs. Balderson. "Not that I agree with you about Winifred. I like and admire her extremely, and I can understand her feeling that poor Lennox is not enough for her. With her talents and strength of character she may aspire higher, not to speak of her—well—material advantages."

Eric gave a little grunt.

Mrs. Balderson sometimes found her son's grunts irritating.

"Celia, of course, is a sweet little thing," she proceeded. "But nothing in her."

Mrs. Balderson was *not* a worldly mother. Still she did not much want Eric to fall in love with Celia.

He grunted again.

"You are very uncivil, Eric," she said, with a touch of asperity. "Can't you say out what you mean? When you are like that you make me feel you are influenced by nothing but commonplace masculine contradiction."

"Perhaps so," he replied.

## CHAPTER IV.

### A FIRST STEP.

"WINIFRED," said Mrs. Balderson, the next morning but one, at the breakfast-table, "here is something that will please you, I think," and she held out to Miss Maryon a letter she had just opened.

It was from Lady Champion, asking them—the sisters and their hostess, or, if Mrs. Balderson were otherwise engaged, the Maryon girls by themselves—to tea that same day, to meet Miss Norreys!

Winifred's eyes sparkled.

"Oh, how delightful!" she said. "How kind of her to have remembered about it!"

But Mrs. Balderson's face had clouded over with an expression of perplexity.

"It is unlucky," she said. "I had forgotten for the moment that we were engaged to go with my cousins, the Nestertons, to the Exhibition of Em-

broidery, in ——— Street, and to go back to tea with them afterwards. It is a pity. Mrs. Nesterton took some trouble to arrange it, and it is the last day of the Exhibition."

"Oh, but it really doesn't matter," said Miss Maryon, and on Mrs. Balderson's looking up with some surprise, for she had supposed that Winifred was exceedingly anxious to meet the woman she had so admired. "I mean," she went on calmly, "I don't at all mind missing the Exhibition, and I really don't know the Nestertons, you see, dear Mrs. Balderson."

Mrs. Balderson did not feel very "dear" at that moment.

"There are other things to be considered," she said, stiffly. "You *were* very eager to see the Exhibition, and I cannot be rude to my cousins, whether you know them or not, my dear Winifred. Besides, there is your sister as well as yourself. What do you say, Celia?"

It was new for Winifred to take in that Celia could have a voice of her own apart from her's: it was new for Celia to realise the fact. But she saw that Mrs. Balderson was annoyed; she had infinitely greater power of putting herself in another's place than was possessed by her elder sister.

"I should be very sorry not to see the embroidery," she replied, quickly, her face flushing a little, "besides it would *never* do to be so rude to Mrs. Nesterton."

"I think Lady Campion deserves some consideration, too," said Winifred, unyieldingly. "She is a very busy person, and she has evidently planned this on purpose to please m—us. And Miss Norreys must be a still busier person. I don't see that Mrs. Nesterton *could* be offended if it was all explained to her."

There was something in what she said, as regarded Lady Campion and Miss Norreys. But Mrs. Balderson, for once, was really vexed.

"Engagements are engagements," she said, in a dry tone, not usual with her.

Celia's face was still flushed. If only she could give Winifred a hint to be more deferential! She was so used to taking the lead at home, thought Celia, she could not help that authoritative manner.

Eric Balderson had watched the breakfast-table drama with slightly cynical interest. It gratified

him to see Miss Maryon showing herself to disadvantage. He did not like her. But he loved his mother and he liked Celia. He did not wish them to be worried. And he was of a kindlier nature than he allowed to himself.

So he came to the rescue.

"Can't you make a compromise?" he said. "Supposing Miss Maryon goes to Lady Campion's, and you, mother, and Miss Celia Maryon keep to the Nesterton engagement? You might call for Miss Maryon on your way back, which would give Ce—Miss Celia Maryon," with a slight twinkle of amusement in his eyes, at his own involuntary freedom, "a good chance of seeing Miss Norreys too. And"—with an obtrusively ponderous sigh—"if it would smooth down Cousin Barbara, I certainly haven't called there for an immense time, I might—there's no saying to what lengths the spirit of self-sacrifice won't carry me—I *might* meet you myself at the Exhibition, and go back to the Nestertons' with you."

Mrs. Balderson's face cleared. She hated being vexed with anybody; it was quite against her nature, if not her principles; she was already regretting her cold words to Winifred, and was pleased to find a consistent way out of the difficulty.

"That would be *very* nice," she said, heartily. "The Nestertons would be so pleased to have you, Eric, that I daresay they would scarcely regret even Winifred."

It was scarcely in human nature to have refrained from this little hit.

"Exactly," said Winifred, coolly. "They can't miss me when they don't know me. Very likely they will not even notice I am not there."

Her coolness struck Celia as it had never done before. She would have given worlds to hint to her sister that something in the way of thanks for falling in with her wishes, to both her hostess and her son, would not have been unbecoming. But the suggestion would have been thrown away upon Miss Maryon, who was a striking example of the possibility of not seeing what she did not want to see. A word timidly hazarded by Celia on the subject, when they found themselves alone for a moment, a short time afterwards, showed the younger sister that any such effort was better unmade.

The afternoon's programme was adhered to,

Celia setting off with Mrs. Balderson to the "rendez-vous" at the Exhibition, in apparently great content, for, if she was secretly disappointed at the small chance of her having more than a glimpse of Hertha Norreys, she was too unselfish and too sensible of what was due to her kind old friend to show it.

And at about a quarter to five, Winifred, in happy independence, and blissfully unconscious of having in any way fallen short in consideration of others or deference to their wishes, found herself making her way into Lady Campion's drawing-room.

Her heart—for she was a girlish creature after all—beat considerably faster than usual: much faster, in all probability, than if she had been about to be introduced to some personage of exalted rank or social position. Her short-sightedness added somewhat also to her unusual embarrassment. For the room was fitfully, rather than dimly, lighted, after the fashion of drawing-rooms of the present day: and Winifred was used to old-fashioned lamps and white panelled wainscoting, reflecting the clear, generally diffused radiance. And there seemed to her to be a whole crowd of people sitting or standing about, as somewhat awkwardly, only just avoiding a catastrophe of some kind, she threaded her way through the too abundant pretty things on every side to the lady of the house.

She was not annoyed or ashamed of herself, however. She was too much in earnest about meeting Miss Norreys to think about herself. So there was real simplicity in her bearing, though for once in her life she looked decidedly timid.

And the look added wonderfully to her charm—in some eyes at least.

It is to be doubted if Hertha would ever have "taken to" the girl as she did, but for the gentleness and appeal about her, this first time they met.

For Lady Campion had found time to whisper a word or two to her friend when Miss Maryon's name was announced.

"This is one of the little country girls—the one," she said, "who fell so desperately in love with you the other day, as I was telling you. Be nice to her, poor dear, won't you? Don't be stuck-up and stand-off."

For both these dreadful things Miss Norreys

*could* be, said rumour—and rumour sometimes speaks truly, on occasion. But not when she was sorry for anyone, not when her large pitiful heart was touched—then no woman could be sweeter and gentler and less alarming than Hertha.

And her first glance at Winifred made her sorry for her. Lady Campion's "poor dear" had misled Miss Norreys. She had no idea that the girl was one of the prosperous of the earth, and Winifred was plainly dressed. She was neat, but that was about all. Her morning attire left perhaps more to be desired than her evening toilettes, which, though a trifle heavy, perhaps, and on the outside of simplicity, were yet, as I said, of rich material, whereas her country ideas had not risen far as regarded the tailor-made tweeds and black or blue serges, which were her usual winter garments.

And the room was imperfectly lighted. All that Miss Norreys saw was a girl of not more than average height and slightly square build, standing with perplexed eyes and an unmistakable air of strangeness, looking about for Lady Campion.

The face was a good one, good in form and pleasant in colouring; the eyes, despite their bewilderment, were clear and sweet—the whole was sweeter than Winifred's face was wont to be, thanks to the passing touch of wistfulness and appeal.

In a moment Lady Campion was greeting her, exerting the charm of manner on which she not unjustly prided herself, to make the girl feel at her ease.

And soon Winifred found herself replying, with her usual readiness, to her hostess's enquiries as to what had become of Mrs. Balderson and "your sister."

"They are coming later," said Miss Maryon. "They have gone first to the Lace Exhibition, in ——— Street, and then to the Nestertons. It was an old engagement, but Mrs. Balderson will certainly call here on her way home."

"It was very good of *you* to come," said Lady Campion. "It would have been too bad if you had all failed us."

"I was only too delighted," said Winifred. "I am so glad to see you again, and"—with a not unbecoming hesitation and rising colour, as she glanced towards where she had, by this time, discovered Hertha—"you know I am *so* grateful to



you for giving me the chance of meeting Miss Norreys. It was so very good of you to remember my wish."

That Lady Campion was *still* remembering it she felt doubtful, as other guests came crowding round her, and she showed signs of moving away.

"I must say it right out, or she will forget to introduce me," thought Winifred, with her customary determination.

But Lady Campion was not quite so flighty and unreliable as she got the credit of being. And she was really good-natured; she rather liked Winifred's downrightness. With a hand in her arm she gently drew the girl forward towards the couch, where sat Miss Norreys, a not uninterested spectator of the little drama.

"Lady Campion *is* a kind woman," she said to herself. For there had been times when she was inclined to judge the lady in question too severely. With all her gifts, Hertha did not possess the capricious power so often found when one could least expect it, so even more frequently absent when one would have made sure of it—of correct, almost unfailing, discernment of character. She was often mistaken, and being by nature much more enthusiastic than she allowed to appear, she had often been disappointed. And this had resulted in a certain hardening of her sympathies, which one felt to be perplexing. *Sometimes*, too, she had found herself obliged to reverse an unfavourable impression—a demand of honesty which brings with it some sting of mortification, interfering with the softening effect of what should be a gratifying discovery.

But hers was a character to mellow as she grew older. And a spark of pity was with her at all times, enough to ensure a glow of kindly interest.

This was what happened just now. She rose from her seat as Lady Campion and Winifred approached, and held out her hand with ready graciousness to the—as she imagined—somewhat shrinking girl, who was feeling herself, no doubt, strange and out of her element.

"It would have been kinder to have asked her by herself—or at least not among quite such a crowd," she thought.

And to anyone knowing Winifred, there would have been something almost amusing in the half protecting tone with which Miss Norreys at once addressed her. But if love is blind, so is youthful

enthusiasm, and Winifred was truly enthusiastic about the young singer. More than this, that anyone could by any possibility look upon *her* as an object of protection or pity had never dawned upon the girl, whose self-confidence and matter-of-fact pre-occupation with her own ideas often dulled her perceptions. If she noticed any special warmth in Miss Norreys' greeting, she put it down, though perhaps scarcely in so many words, to the favourable impression she herself made on her new acquaintance.

"We took to each other from the first moment," she said to Celia afterwards in describing the meeting.

"Will you come and sit down by me for a little—there is plenty of room on the sofa?" said Hertha, and Winifred delightedly obeyed. "Lady Campion tells me," she went on, "that this is, practically, almost your first visit to London. I think I envy you."

"Do you?" said Winifred, not quite sure of her meaning. "I—I really don't know. We live quite, *quite* in the country, you see. It is of course very interesting to see London for the first time when one is old enough to take it in better, but"—

"That is what I meant," interrupted Miss Norreys, pleased at being understood. "I did not mean—at least I was not just then thinking of the other side—the delights of true country life, of 'quite, *quite* in the country' life," with a little smile.

"Oh!" said Winifred, with a sigh. "If you knew what it was—all the year round—so monotonous, so *narrow*. I feel, since coming here, as if all my time hitherto had been wasted."

"Poor child!" thought Miss Norreys, "a country parson's daughter, I think Helena Campion said, and, *of course*, poor. I can fancy the life must be rather terrible—grinding away to make both ends meet. Probably a lot of younger brothers and sisters. And she is evidently a clever girl—a girl of ideas."

"It is never too late to mend," she said, cheerfully. "You will go home enriched by a store of new thoughts and knowledge. I doubt if you would have benefitted in the same way had you seen more of this wonderful—yes, it is wonderful—modern London life when you were younger. Though you are very young still."

"No," said Winifred, quaintly, with a little shake of her head, "I am not very young. And—I have

come up to London with an object. I have waited so long, and I have tried to be patient! But now, at last, I do trust I am to find an opening. I *must* get something to do—a career. It was surely a good omen that I should have seen you, Miss Norreys, the very first day, for I feel you will sympathise with me—you who have risen above the stupid old-fashioned trammels so grandly. Of course I know there can be no comparison—you are a genius, I have only very ordinary powers, very imperfectly trained. But I have determination and courage. I feel it is in me to do *something*—not to be condemned to the terribly narrow life, which is all I have to look to unless I succeed.”

She spoke so rapidly, and yet so earnestly, that Hertha could not attempt to stop her. Yet it was hardly the place or time for a personal discussion of the kind. Miss Norreys felt touched, and yet a trifle annoyed. It was scarcely fair of Lady Campion, who must have known all about this girl, to have encouraged her to thus appeal to her, a stranger for advice and assistance. For in plain English, these, no doubt, were what she was in want of.

“And what can I do for her?” thought Hertha. “My world is the musical world. She does not speak of any special gifts in that direction. Yet, poor girl, evidently she is in the right about doing *something*. I do sympathise with that. If I had had no music in me, no voice, or no distinct talent, still I could have done *something*, rather than drag on, striving to make both ends meet, with no energy left for better things, as some poor women do.”

These reflections passed through her mind, softening her momentary irritation. But for a few minutes she sat silent.

Winifred watched her intently.

“You will advise me,” she said at last, in a half whisper. “You do sympathise with me?”

Miss Norreys roused herself.

“My dear Miss Maryon,” she said, “of course I sympathise with you: I understand the position only too well, and I feel for you very much. But what can I do? You have no marked musical talent, I suppose—the only advice of mine really worth anything, for it is backed by my own experience, would refer to a musical career?”

Winifred shook her head.

“No,” she said, “I am not musical. I wish I were—at least—no, I am not sure that that is the gift I covet most. Yet, do not misunderstand me,”

she added hastily; “I *love* music. When listening to some music, when listening to your voice, I feel as if my soul were awakening, as if it had found itself.”

She was in earnest—her eyes glowed, her really fine features seemed full of emotion; yet, was it her extreme, though unconscious, egotism that slightly repelled Miss Norreys?

“I wish she were not so high-flown,” she thought. “Still, she is not affected: she does not mean to be so, at any rate. And she is candid. But I do love simplicity. I don’t think she would ever do to be a governess, but I don’t suppose she has any thought of so commonplace a career.”

“Then what—in what direction do you mean to turn?” she asked aloud. “You have thought too much about it not to have some definite ideas?”

“I have several,” Winifred replied eagerly. “I ask nothing better than to tell you all. And what I thought you would advise me about was as to living in London: I must arrange that almost first of anything. Don’t you think I am quite old enough to live alone?”

“Certainly not,” Miss Norreys replied, with a smile. “Besides, you would find it very expensive if you care about any sort of comfort.”

“I don’t,” said Winifred, confidently. “But—well, yes, I suppose I must consider it to some extent, for the sake of my people, you see—and—if you really think I can’t live alone—”

But at that moment Hertha saw approaching her a great friend of hers—a man to whom she was bound by long-standing ties of affection and gratitude, but whom, owing to his and her own busy lives, she met less frequently than she would have wished. She turned to Winifred—

“I must speak to Mr.—to the man who has just come in,” she said, half rising from her seat. “Some other time, perhaps, Miss Maryon—”

“How tiresome!” said Winifred. “Just when we were getting into a really nice talk. Cannot you just say a word or two to him, and come back again, Miss Norreys?”

But Hertha was really on her feet by this time.

“We must arrange some other day. I will write to you,” she said, hurriedly, eager not to miss the pleasant chance before her.

And Winifred remained alone on the sofa. She was satisfied on the whole; she had made a beginning. Miss Norreys was appreciative, and she felt sure of her ground with her.

(To be continued.)



## THINGS IN GENERAL.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

THE beginning is always a more cheerful thing to contemplate than the end, and there is much that is reasonable in the general thrill of expectation, and, perhaps, in most instances, of the pleasure, which hails the beginning of the Season. It is a thing of so much importance that it demands a big S, and not the simple c.t. or common type with which we correct the extravagance of the printer who makes us discourse upon the Summer Season or the Winter Season, or even the Season on the Riviera, or at Florence or Brighton. All these insignificant sections of time are as nothing in comparison with that period for which all the fiddles of the world have now been tuned. The London season, indeed, is a very great and important matter. Other capitals have their seasons also; they have their festivities, their splendours, their time of living at the highest pressure, but I doubt if any of them have the same significance. Paris is always Paris, whether it is the season or not, and the race of life is not much quickened then, I think, for any class but those who belong more or less effectively to the world of fashion. The bourgeoisie is not much affected by it, but perhaps this is because the bourgeoisie is much more distinct in France than it is among ourselves. None of us like to own to it on this side of the channel. We speak universally as if we all belonged to the class which is at least the cream—if not the cream of the cream—of society. In my early days a great many people considered them-

selves to be of the middle classes, who would scorn such a designation now. Professional people in general, clergymen, lawyers, doctors, and, with still more reason, artists, literary persons, and all the rest, except in cases where some previous grade of birth or connection with aristocracy existed, were at the head of the middle class. So were merchants and manufacturers, and even the magnates of the industrial world. But now that distinction is considered invidious, and is swept away. The middle classes consist of tradesmen and shopkeepers; people who do not claim in any way the title of gentlemen—and we all believe ourselves to belong to the upper strata along with the dukes and millionaires. It is curious how this change of term has come about, for naturally it makes very little change in the fact. We were as good gentlemen (and ladies) when we called ourselves the middle classes as now. Those who were "out of the swim" are still out of it as much as ever. To be well educated, well bred, well dressed, well mannered does not give the young man or young woman any claim upon society, as generally so called. It is less easy to know what does than in such a society, for example, as that of Vienna, where to be obliged to sit down at table with anyone who is not noble strikes a chill to the soul of those urbane and delightful Austrians, who, it is the fashion to believe, are so much more agreeable than the heavier Germans of the North—though there is a charitable exception made in

favour of English people, whose rank it is less easy to determine, in the comparative absence of titles. But this is a digression.

Still more remarkable than the style of designation is the unconscious way in which so many of us have assumed the fashion of living, and what I may call the sentiment of life, which properly belongs to the most elevated class. We must, I presume, live generally at a far greater expense than our fathers did. We certainly have preserved no characteristic ways of our own: we do not live as they did. The greater part of us, for example, regard this influx of the season as if it were the natural tide that quickened and filled our life, as it does that of those who come up from their country houses for that purpose, to join in everything that is going on, and swell its crowd and the whirl of its life. Most likely we do nothing of the sort, but live very much in our usual round, with perhaps a few additional plays or concerts because the best of everything is then going on. I am always sorry for the young people, especially if they be of a visionary kind, who read in all their books of that whirl of life, as if everybody worth mentioning was in it, and hear it spoken of as if in some mysterious way it was shared even by their own humble belongings, and then grow up to find that they have as little to do with it as if they had been born in Kamtchatka instead of London. It is a most obstinate prejudice in the youthful bosom that we ourselves, when we come upon the scene, whatever our fathers may have done before us, must naturally succeed to the best of everything, all barriers being thrown down before us. And how noble a thing is society as seen through the glamour of youthful eyes. It is in one of Mr. Browning's poems, I think, that a young lady, in anticipation of the glories before her, imagines herself sitting with Tennyson at her right hand. Now, as a matter of fact, this was a very difficult gratification to procure, and the encounter of a great poet is by no means an essential of society. You were much more likely to know him if you lived in his village, or by any other vague chances of life upon which no one can calculate. But there is one good thing of the season in which we all have a share. It is always pleasant, or almost always, except for hermits or misanthropes, to feel the quickened current, the larger stream of life, and if not the actual sensation of the crowd, yet at least its

radiation, so to speak—the sound of the voices in the air, the glimmer of changing colour. I confess that I like the sight of a village when its fair is going on, or any other festivity. The centre point, where the bumpkins delight themselves, may not be engaging, but the people going towards it, with their clothes a little finer than usual, their little air of expectation, their consciousness of something which is not to be had every day—and the very look of the roads full of moving figures, a flag here and there, a distant sound of music—if you can call the local band music—is full of subtle, suggestive pleasure. Perhaps to see them coming back is not so good: there are disappointments. The wild beasts have not been so terrible, nor the jugglers so wonderful, nor the strolling ladies so beautiful as they hoped, and the good people are tired, and—in a word, it is over, the day which had been looked forward to so long. There is an Italian poet whom we do not know in England as well as he ought to be known—the unfortunate and melancholy Leopardi, whose poetry is the embodiment of this last feeling. It is the eve of the feast of which he is always singing. I have not the book at hand to quote from it, but there is one exquisite little poem of his which describes the *Sabbato del villaggio*, the Saturday night in the village, where all the preparations are being made for the festa of the next day. The reader knows, however much he may disapprove of it, that Sunday is the special day for pleasure in most Roman Catholic countries. But it is not the pleasure: it is the anticipation of it which is sweet, says our poet. When Sunday comes there come with it no further anticipations of pleasure, but only those of common life, and work which will begin again next day. And youth is the Saturday night of life, the eve of the great fair, the anticipation of the feast. We have no reason to look at things in Leopardi's gloomy way. I think that old women like myself enjoy as much the sight of our grandchildren setting out for the fair, standing at the door to watch them giving a last touch to a pretty handkerchief or a ribbon, proud of their good looks and their fun and their jokes, though these may be poor enough, as when we were the heroines of the occasion in our own persons. It is a different, but in some ways a more exquisite, pleasure. And what I have called the radiation of the heightened life and gaiety goes very far. The

sight of the 'oofs of the 'orses fills the children with wild excitement, in which there is a sharper surprise of pleasure than if they had all a penny for the show. When there is some great procession going through London—a marriage, a funeral, or a thanksgiving, the excitement radiates down through the back streets, where the people who are left at home are out at all their doors, hearing a vague sound afar off, seeing the people run by to the street corner to catch a glimpse, or an orderly dash down the causeway, or a belated functionary hurry past. The sentiment of all that is going on gets into the air, and that is enough for a great many people. On the other hand it is disappointing for the young, who are full of imagination, and would like to have a hand in it for themselves. I have always felt that, for the girls, for instance, who are not in that world, a visit to Rotten Row in the height of the season must be a doubtful pleasure. It is the prettiest sight. The beautiful people, the beautiful horses, the beautiful dresses, the talk (most disjointed and uninteresting), of which they must hear scraps as they pass. "Shall I see you at Lady So-and-So's?" "Are you going to Mrs. Blank's ball to-night?" One would like to go to Mrs. Blank's ball too, though it will probably be a crush, in which the last thing possible will be dancing. One would like to know every second person one meets, and to join in the flutter of the reminiscences and anticipations. It is a Barmecide feast. My interest is always with the people who

are left out. Those who have the active enjoyment of these fine things are often bored with them, and know all the drawbacks. In some way the others have the best of it, their imagination being much better than the reality—yet it is not pleasant to be out of it. However, it is the fate of much the greater part of the world.

And there are many things which we have all the better because it is the season. There is the best of music, and there are the best of plays—perhaps in respect to the latter the best is often doubtful; but still the greatest actors are here, and if not anything new, at least revivals of those pieces which are known to please. The uncertain *matinées*, the experimental performances, are suspended. It is expedient upon everybody to do their best, and they are aware that they must do so or fail altogether. And then, a cheaper pleasure still, the aspect of the streets, the look of the parks, nay, the little carts of flowers which go everywhere, are an unfailing enjoyment. Coming from the very country of flowers, where every beautiful blossom abounds to profusion, even to weariness, at this time of the year, the costermonger's barrow full of flowers in a dull little London street is a delight to me. There is an air of summer in it, of the breaking forth of all the springs of nature, of the yearly renewal and change and new beginning. The new beginning in itself is one of the highest exhilarations of life.



# THE ATALANTA SCHOLARSHIP AND SCHOOL OF FICTION



## THE HUMAN NOVEL.

*As exemplified by Mrs. Gaskell.*

BY MAXWELL GRAY.

IT is almost impossible to classify the best novelists. Mrs. Gaskell, for want of a better distinction, shall be placed in the human class, along with Shakspeare in his art, because the secret of her witchery is that she truly and skilfully depicts humanity. To be human is the main business of a novel or drama, so that, after all, to call a novel human is but another way of saying that it is of the first class: novels that can be classified must be of the second, though excelling in that, since their greatest merits are non-essential. The novel of adventure, however delightful it may be, does not bring the highest creative powers of the writer into play: nor do the nautical, the military, the historical, the novel of incident, the interest of which last lies in the gradual disentanglement of the intricacies of a labyrinthine plot: neither does the novel with a purpose, the didactic, the sporting, or the society novel. Yet each may be perfect in its kind.

Next to Thackeray, who towers above every English novelist, stand four women writers—George Eliot, Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, and

her genial biographer, Mrs. Gaskell. This lady, who lacks the broad, and in some degree cynical, views of humanity Thackeray gained by his intimate acquaintance with social, and especially club, life, possesses much of what is best and most distinctive in the two first of her sister novelists, but has not the unique and almost consuming fire and passion of the third. Scott and Dickens can scarcely enter the lists with these five; strictly speaking, novelists they are not, any more than Defoe and Bunyan, since they do not aim at representing the ordinary life and manners of, or quite near to, their time for the simple purpose of diverting their readers. Scott almost entirely confines himself to that domain of historic romance in which he reigns supreme. Dickens keeps within the limits of grotesque and caricature of contemporary life, in which he fully merits his own epithet, "the inimitable." But after Thackeray and these four—imagine the amazement and amusement of Amelia's inventor at being ranged along with this sisterhood at the head of his tribe, embarrassed at the impossibility of offering all an arm, and still more at the secret consciousness that each excelled him in some one thing!—after these follow all the

rest; a goodly company of men and women. More strictly of women and men; for, though in most things, from writing an epic to nursing a baby, men are more capable than women, I fancy, albeit, like Mrs. Gaskell's own Martha in the matchless mosaic, "Cranford," I "like the lads best"—the lasses are the most skilful in this art of story-telling.

They begin in the nursery, telling stories to little brothers and sisters; when espoused to sultans they keep their heads on for a thousand and one nights at a stretch by the same process, and end, as living chronicles of the past, with old wives' tales. We know on excellent authority that they are the proper chroniclers of small beer, and to do this with skill and grace is essential to the professional story-teller. In such chronicling Thackeray and his four sisters—again I see the good-natured yet sarcastic grin on the great man's genial face—excel, though not in that alone.

How strong and subtle is the magic that makes their table-beer foam and dance with enlivening sparkle in the finely-wrought glasses their genius fashions! This magic, which defies analysis, makes Mr. Woodhouse's immortal gruel, Mr. Rochester's sugar plums, the curry that Becky Sharp in an evil hour swallowed, the herrings that so sorely vexed poor Rosamond Vincy of a morning, and the oranges that Miss Deborah and Miss Mattie enjoyed in solemn privacy at Cranford, Olympian ambrosia. Anything more dreary and dispiriting than the society at Cranford can scarcely be imagined; it does not rise to small beer, ditch-water would be lively by comparison. Yet from this unpromising material, the dull and trivial round in a dull little town of a few dull and common-place households, consisting of half a dozen old ladies in a state of arrested development, all absolutely ignorant of everything outside their narrow circle, all scarcely conscious of the existence of elemental human passions; thanks to minute and accurate perception and description, to a delicacy of touch and subtlety of dainty humour unrivalled save by Miss Austen; thanks to the marvellous instinct for selection that marks the true artist; thanks, above all, to a broad, tender, and penetrating sympathy, to a delight in all that is refined and pure and perennially lovely, to an exquisite pity and genial sense of fellowship with all that has life and feeling—is constructed an immortal piece of fascination, that makes us laugh and cry, love, rejoice,

and revere, that stirs and fosters all that is gentlest, purest, and sweetest in us. The mirth of Cranford is so delicate, the satire so kindly, the pity and pathos so deep and sincere, the whole so entirely devoid of a false note; we must needs be better for our introduction to that little coterie. Something of Addisonian grace and purity of style and subtlety of humour is here; something of the tender amusement and loving reverence that Addison feels for Sir Roger de Coverley, Mrs. Gaskell cherishes, together with a warmth of sympathy and comprehension peculiar to herself, for the ladies of Cranford. The chronicle of their small beer charmed me, as "Sylvia's Lovers" stirred me, in early teens; Cranford, read to-day, has a deeper and stronger charm, while "Sylvia's Lovers," though not so entirely fascinating as then (partly owing to the natural incapacity of riper years for falling in love with the gallant Kinraid) is still a delightful, wholesome, powerful, and eminently dramatic novel, tinged, as is all Mrs. Gaskell's work—even Cranford—with a peculiar sadness, usually gentle, like the sadness of lengthening spring days or long summer evenings, at times deepening to positive gloom.

This sadness may in some measure account for the slight estimation, in comparison with her merits, in which Mrs. Gaskell is held. Much of her work is oppressive in its sadness, partly, no doubt, from the sombre scenes in which some of her tales are laid. In many novels she seems afraid to indulge in the delicate, but never rollicking or high-spirited, humour which makes so much of the charm and brightness of her best work, and which begins in "My Lady Ludlow," and culminates in her last and most popular work, "Wives and Daughters," that story brought to a premature close in the "Cornhill Magazine" by the writer's untimely death in the autumn of 1865. She was not always happy in her themes. There are phases of English life that cannot be made the subject of fiction, from their intrinsic and insupportable gloom; they can only be brought in as masses of shadow to throw up the high lights in the picture.

The somewhat crude story of "Ruth," very noble in aim, pure in tone, and daring in protest against the social injustice of those days, is entirely depressing in effect: a pocket-handkerchief would be handy all the way through. But Ruth belongs to the early period, like "Mary Barton" (1845-47),



which is a promising and powerful novel, though cramped, as the writer tells us, by the necessities of serial publication in "Household Words," and seemingly also by the views of its editor, according to whose custom in his own works, "the poor" are spoken of throughout in an apologetic and explanatory manner, as of a totally distinct species hitherto unknown, yet nearly allied, after all, to the human race proper. Life, especially of "the poor," in a manufacturing town is too sombre and unlovely to form the basis of a work of fiction. Perhaps not all the humour of Mr. Barrie's "A Window in Thrums" can make the whole impression of that story other than depressing, while in "Mary Barton" Mrs. Gaskell has not yet learnt the secret of her own humour, and the story itself is one of almost unrelieved gloom. Yet there are few finer things in fiction—scarcely even Jeanie Dean's attempt to win her sister's pardon—than Mary's daring and difficult, but successful, chase after the sailor who is to save her lover from being condemned for murder by proving an alibi: but the reader is too much oppressed by Mary's knowledge that her own father is the guilty man, and by the subsequent painting of that father's remorse and death—not to speak of deaths dotted all along the story from beginning to end—to rejoice properly at Jem's deliverance and Mary's dramatic declaration of her love for him in the open court.

Indeed it must be confessed that Mrs. Gaskell's people not only die far too often, but that they take a most unreasonable time in getting their dying done, and that her abnormally high death-rate—although she thinks nothing of hanging and other violent deaths—is equalled, if not surpassed, by that of sickness. Many knotty social and economical problems of to-day might have been spared us had the actual world contained so much sickness and mortality, with so very small a proportion of births, as we find in her pages: still the births and marriages are more cheering to contemplate. Yet in spite of this unholy passion for slaying and afflicting them, Mrs. Gaskell is very fond of her people, and makes her readers love them and their race. No writer has keener or subtler ethical perceptions than she; not the faintest swerve from right doing and thinking escapes her; yet she never loses her loving sympathy for the most hardened transgressor. She knows nothing of Charlotte Brontë's indignant hatred, strangely mingled with fear and contempt,

for her villains and villainesses, or of George Eliot's cold, relentless parading of carefully-detected flaws in all but her few chosen, who one and all verge upon priggishness. Had Mrs. Gaskell drawn Hetty Sorrel, she would have loved her and made her lovable: George Eliot draws her with so stern and savage a touch that, though we are obliged to own to Hetty's weaknesses, we instinctively take her part against the harsh judgment of her creator. In the same way we are inclined to rebel against her savage contempt for Tito, who is not more selfish than old Bardi. The sweet and fascinating figure of Sylvia Robson suggests comparison with Hetty: Sylvia is the daintiest of low-born lasses, a true queen of curds and cream. Like Hetty, she has her innocent coquetties and girlish foibles, but she is infinitely more live and natural because drawn with that loving touch. But Sylvia is innocent. So is Eppie, Silas Marner's child, but Eppie does not greatly charm us. To be sure, Sylvia is more than a charming country girl; she always, like Perdita, suggests something nobler than her surroundings. Her character unfolds with events as naturally as rose-buds unclose, she becomes a noble, though by no means perfect, woman. George Eliot could not have created a Sylvia; she would have hunted out and exposed her defects mercilessly, have given a sinister turn to her best qualities, and blinded us to her true nobility by harsh censure of them. Her heroines are either too good or too bad, except Maggie Tulliver, who is confessedly not charming. Mrs. Gaskell's women are always human, and mostly charming; never austere, like Dorothea, or hard, like Romola. With her evident distrust of her insight into male character, she concentrates her energies chiefly on female portraiture; yet her men, too, are human, life-like, and generally lovable. Philip Hepburn is a very subtle and finely-drawn character, one that in any hands but hers would have been repulsive; nevertheless, by her fine art and exquisite sympathy for suffering of every kind, she makes us feel most for Philip, the least attractive and most guilty person in the story. Every character in "Sylvia's Lovers" lives and moves and is carefully realized, yet not one of them is unlovable. This story ranks among the few finest—near "Adam Bede" and "I Promessi Sposi," though "Wives and Daughters" contains much that marks a wider grasp of human



character, and a higher stage of development in the writer, and is the most generally admired.

For Mrs. Gaskell's genius was slow to develop : it gradually mellowed and gathered strength, so that the "Mary Barton" of 1847 is, to the "Wives and Daughters" of 1865, as blossom-bud to fruit. Her early work is evidently somewhat oppressed by the influence of Dickens, and is fettered by many conventions she afterwards gathered strength to break—a development that again marks her for comparison and contrast with her greater contemporary, whose Adam Bede touched the high-water mark whence her subsequent novels gradually declined, becoming less and less human beneath the deadening burden of ethical subtleties and that ponderous philosophy which crushed the poetry out of Goethe himself, and a smattering of which seems to be stupefying the present generation of novel readers, till they care for nothing that is not in the nature of a monstrosity or curio. Human nature is not exciting or complex enough for them, a pure and limpid style infused with the breath of poetry, is too tame ; they yearn for the extravagant, the amorphous, and the lawless, both in style and matter. If "Society at Cranford" appeared to-day, it would be read only by a select few, and, if it in time survived contemporary neglect, would become a classic. Mrs. Gaskell evidently distrusted her own powers, and was ignorant of her own limitations, hence the mass of her work is by no means equal to what it might have been. Seeing clearly and truly that her vision of contemporary human life was limited, and that the darker and fiercer elements of humanity were beyond her grasp, she sought other than simply human elements of interest, not knowing that, within her peculiar sphere, like Jane Austen within hers, she was simply perfect. Thus we find in Mary Barton, besides the historical strike and famine, and the stirring incidents of the trial for murder with its dramatic climax, a vivid and picturesque description of a fire, and the daring rescue of some half-smothered men by the hero, Jem, who carries them on his shoulders over a bridge formed by a ladder passed across the street from attic to attic. In "Sylvia's Lovers" there is the description of the whaling village and the life of the whalers, especially the return of the ships, singu-

larly like, and yet different from, Pierre Loti's recent picture of the Breton whaling village, in "L'Pecheur d'Islande," wild and vivid tales of sea-marvels related by the young whaler to her father, in the hearing of Sylvia, who listened, like Desdemona, and with similar result—a battle and a rescue from a wreck, besides the stirring press-gang scenes, which pervade and colour the whole story. All these are admirable, picturesque, and conducive to the beauty and charm of the whole ; but in human interest and presentation and development of character consists the main power and claim to distinction of this fine story. There is a tradition—I cannot say how far founded on fact—that Tennyson acknowledged himself indebted to "Sylvia's Lovers" for the noble and pathetic story of Enoch Arden, with which it has much in common. If it be so, it is a little singular that both in novel and poem the early disappointed and finally successful lover should be named Philip, be a comparatively rich tradesman, and accepted from mingled gratitude, compassion, and necessity, by Annie, to afford a home and protector for her children ; by Sylvia, to give the same to her widowed, childish mother. But the story of the returned wanderer is, in outline, at least as old as the Odyssey.

It would be ungrateful to part from Mrs. Gaskell, who has furnished us with so much wholesome and delicate delight, without acknowledging the great beauty and deepened power of human portraiture in "Wives and Daughters ;" the humour, especially shewn in the delineation of that inimitable woman, the second Mrs. Gibson, is dainty and delicious ; Mr. Gibson, the country surgeon, by some readers held as the hero or main personage of the story, is one of the most skilfully-drawn and living characters in fiction.

Not the least pathetic and skilfully-told of Mrs. Gaskell's stories is no fiction, but one of the few classic biographies—the life of her friend and sister-novelist, Charlotte Brontë. A life of Mrs. Gaskell might throw some light upon the causes that cramped her powers and led to the final result of her work falling beneath what it ought to have been. Perhaps after all it was only because she was a woman, and so prevented by other duties and necessities from developing her mental and artistic power.

## SCHOOL OF FICTION AND READING UNION.

A Discussion on the Equality of the Sexes, between Miss Minerva Lexicon, M.A., an Apostle of Progress, and Miss Lavinia Straightlace, of the Old-fashioned School. The 500 words may be wholly devoted to the dialogue and to emphasizing the opposite views of the disputants. As little partiality as possible should be shewn.

## SEARCH QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

### I.

1. Whence is the following quotation taken?—  
When sleep was coy, the bard, in waiting there,  
Cheered the lone midnight with the Muse's lore.
2. What office is referred to?

### II.

1. Give the meaning of the following terms :—*Habergeon* ; *Tassel gent* ; *whally* ; *snag* ; *brawned bowrs*.
2. In what poem do they all occur.

### III.

- By whom was this epitaph composed?
- These are two friends whose lives were undivided ;  
So let their memory be, now they have glided  
Under their grave ; let not their bones be parted,  
For their two hearts in life were single-hearted.

### IV.

Who wrote the words of the following songs :—*The Better Land* ; *Then Farewell my trim-built Wherry* ; *W't a hundred Pipers* ; *Hearts of Oak* ; *The Ivy Green*.

### V.

1. By whom and to whom are these lines addressed?—  
And thou, who did'st the stars and sunbeams know,  
Self-schooled, self-scann'd, self-honour'd, self-secure,  
Did'st walk on earth unguess'd at—Better so !
2. In what poetic form is the poem written?

### VI.

1. What is this a description of?  
And where the two contrived their daughter's good  
Lies the hawk's cast, the mole has made his run,  
The hedgehog underneath the plantain bores,  
The rabbit fondles his own harmless face,  
The slow-worm creeps, and the thin weasel there  
Follows the n. use, and all is open field.
2. Give poem and author.

### VII.

1. Who speaks these words?—  
He soon replied : " I do admire  
Of womankind but one,  
And you are she, my dearest dear,  
Therefore it shall be done."
2. Who is the reputed original of the poem?

### VIII.

1. What is the reply given to these poetical questions?—  
But what strange art, what magic can dispose  
The troubled mind to change its native woes?  
Or lead us willing from ourselves to see  
Others more wretched, more undone than we?
2. Give poem and author.

## ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (MAY).

### I.

*Cymbeline* ; *Henry VIII.* ; *All's well that ends well* ; *Much ado about nothing* ; *Tempest*.

### II.

1. *Newspapers* ; *Jews*. 2. Crabbe ; *The Newspaper* ; *The Borough—Religious Sects*.

### III.

1. *The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan*. 2. The Persians say that if a man breathe in the hot south wind, which, in June or July, passes over that flower (the *kerzereh*), it will kill him.

### IV.

*Epping Hunt* ; *Please to Ring the Belle*, by Thomas Hood.

### V.

1. Dryden. 2. Lord Macaulay.
- Pope's *Rape of the Lock*.

### VI.

John Keats ; Philip Bourke Marston ; Lord Tennyson ; Dante Rossetti.

### VII.

1. The Vicar of Wakefield. 2. " To admonish his wife of her duty to him, and his fidelity to her ; to inspire her with a passion for fame, and constantly put her in mind of her end."





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# KITTENS.

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Oliver Rhyss pinx.

SIR  
Robert's



Fortune.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

WHEN Sir Robert went in somewhat reluctantly to Lily's room—for he was not accustomed to illness, and did not know what to do or say, or even how to look in a sick room—he found her fully conscious, very white, very worn, her eyes looking twice their usual size and full of that wonderful translucent clearness, which exhaustion gives. Her face, he did not know why, disposed the old gentleman to shed tears, though he was very far indeed from having any inclination that way in general. There was a smile upon it, a smile of wistful appeal to him, such a claim upon his sympathy and help, as perhaps no other human creature had ever made before.

"Uncle," she cried, holding out two thin hands which seemed whiter than the mass of white linen about her. "Uncle Robert! oh! are you there? I have been an ill bairn to you, Uncle Robert. I have not been faithful nor true. You sent me here for my good, and I've turned it to harm. But you're my only kin and my only friend, and all that I have in the world."

"Lily, my dear, compose yourself, my poor lassie. I am not blaming you: why should I

blame you? When you were ill what could you do but lie in your bed and be taken care of?—Woman, have ye no sense? She is not fit yet to be troubled with visits, you might have seen that."

"Oh, Sir Robert, and so I did! But how could I cross her, when she just said without ceasing, 'I want my uncle. I want to see my uncle.' She was not to be crossed, the doctor said."

"It was not Beenie's fault." Lily stretched out her hands till they reached her uncle's, who stood by her bedside, yet as far off as he could, not to appear unkind. He was a little horrified by the touch of those hot hands. She threw herself half out of the bed to reach him, and caught his hard and bony old hand, so firm still and strong, between those white quivering fingers, almost fluid in their softness, which enveloped his with a sudden heat and atmosphere, so strange and unusual, that he retreated still a step, though he could not withdraw his hand.

"Uncle Robert, you will not forsake me," Lily cried. "I have only you now, I have only you. I have been ill to you, but oh, be good to me! I am a very lonely woman, I have nobody. I have put my trust in—other things, and they have all failed me! I've had a long dream

and now I've awakened. Uncle Robert, I have nobody but you in all the world."

"Now Lily, you must just compose yourself, my dear. Who thought of forsaking you? It is certain that you are my only near relation. Your father was my only brother. What would ail me at you? My poor lassie, just let yourself be covered up, and put your arms under the clothes and try if you cannot sleep a little. A good sleep would be the best thing for her, Robina, wouldn't you say? Compose yourself, compose yourself, my dear."

Lily still clung to his hand, though he tried so hard to withdraw it from her hold. "And I will be different," she said. "You will never need to complain of me more. My visions and my dreams, they are all melted away, like the snow yon winter time, when my head was just carried and I did not know what I was doing. Oh, I have been ill to you, ill to you! Eaten your bread and dwelt in your house and been a traitor to you. If they tell you, oh, Uncle Robert, do not believe I was so bad as that. I never meant it, I never intended—It was a great delusion—and it is me that has the worst to bear."

"Robina," cried Sir Robert, "this will never do. What disjointed nonsense has the poor thing got into her head? She will be as bad as ever if you do not take care. No more of it, no more of it, Lily. You've been very ill, you must be quiet and don't trouble your head about anything. As for your old uncle, he will stand by you, my poor lassie, whatever you may have done—not that I believe for a moment you have done anything." He was greatly relieved to get his hand free. He went so far as to cover her shoulders with the bedclothes, and to give a little pat upon the white counterpane. Poor little thing! Her head was not right yet. Great care must be taken of the poor lassie. He had heard they were fond of accusing themselves of all kinds of crimes after an attack of this sort.

"I suppose the doctor will be coming to-day," he said to Beenie, as he hastily withdrew towards the door.

"It's very near his hour, Sir Robert."

"That's well, that's very well. Keep her as quiet as you can, that's the great thing, and tell her from me that she is not to trouble her head about anything—about anything, mind," said Sir

Robert, with an emphasis which had no real meaning, though it awakened a hundred alarms in Beenie's mind. She thought he must have been told, he must have found out something of the history of these past months. But, indeed, the old gentleman knew nothing at all, and meant nothing but to express, more or less in the superlative, his conviction that poor Lily was still under the dominion of her delusions, and that it was her fever, not herself, which brought from her lips these incomprehensible confessions. He understood that it was often so in these cases: probably if he had let her go on she would have confessed to him that she had tried to murder—Douglass, say, or somebody else equally likely. The only thing was to keep her quiet, to impress upon her that she was not to trouble her head about anything, not about anything, in the strongest way in which that assurance could be put.

Lily lay quite still for a long time after Sir Robert had escaped from the room. She was very weak and easily exhausted, but happily the weakness of both body and brain dulled, except at intervals, the active sense of misery, and even the memory of those events which had ravaged her life. She was still quite quiet when the doctor came, and smiled at him with the faint smile of recovered consciousness and intelligence, though with scarcely a movement as she lay on her pillows, recovered, yet so prostrated in strength, that she lay like one cast up by the waves, half dead, unable to struggle or even to lift a finger for her own help. A much puzzled man was the doctor who had brought her successfully through this long and dreadful illness, but whose mind had been sorely exercised to account for many things which connected this malady with what had gone before. That he divined a great deal of what had gone before, there was little doubt: but he had no light upon Lily's real position, and his heart was sore for a young creature, a lady, in such sore straits and with, probably, a cloud hanging over her which would spoil her entire life. And he was a prudent man, and asked no questions which he was not compelled to ask. Had it been a village girl, he would have formed his conclusions with less hesitation, and felt less deeply: but it was a very different matter with Sir Robert Ramsay's niece, who would be judged far more severely and lose

much more than any village maiden was likely to do. Poor girl! he tried as best he could, like a good man as he was, to save her as much as possible even from the suggestion of any suspicion. "What has she been doing? You have allowed her to do too much," he said.

"She would see her uncle, doctor: she just insisted that she would see Sir Robert. If I had crossed her in that, would it no have been just as bad?"

The white face on the pillow smiled faintly and breathed, rather than said, "It was my fault."

"And he said she was not to trouble her head about anything, not about *anything*, doctor—and that was a comfort to her: she was so vexed, him coming for the first time to his ain house, and her no able to welcome him, nor do anything for him."

"That's a very small matter: she must think of that no more. What you have to do now, Miss Ramsay, is just to think of nothing—to trouble your head about nothing, as Sir Robert judiciously says—to take what you can in the way of nourishment, and to sleep as much as you can, and to think about nothing. I absolutely proebit thinking," he said, bending over her with a smile. She was so touching a sight in her great weakness, and with even his uncertain perception of what was behind and before her, that the moisture came into the honest doctor's eyes.

Lily gave him another faint smile, and shook her head, if that little movement on the pillow could be called shaking her head, and then he gave Beenie her instructions, and with a perplexed mind, proceeded to the interview with Sir Robert, to which he had been summoned. He did not know what he would say to Sir Robert if his questions were of a penetrating kind. But Sir Robert's questions were not penetrating at all.

"She has been hawering to me, poor lassie," said the old gentleman, "about being alone in the world and with nobody but me to look after her. It is true enough. We have no relations, either her or me, being the last of the family. But why should she think I would forsake her? And she says she has been an ill bairn to me, and other things that have just no sense in them. But that's a common thing, doctor? is it not quite a common thing that people coming out of such an illness take fancies that they have done all sorts of harm?"

"The commonest thing in the world," said the doctor, cheerfully. "Did she say she had stolen your gear, or broken into your strong box?"

"There is no saying what she would have said if I had let her go on," said Sir Robert, with a laugh, "though indeed I was nearer crying than laughing to see her so reduced. But all that will come right in time?"

"It will all come right in time. She's weaker than I like to see, and you must send for me night or day, at any moment, if there is any increase of weakness. But I hope better things. Leave her to the women: they're very kind and not so silly as might reasonably be expected. Don't go near her, if I might advise you, Sir Robert."

"Indeed I will obey you there," said the old gentleman, "no fear of that. I can do her no good, poor thing, and why should I trouble both her and myself with useless visits? No, no, I will take care of that."

And the doctor went away anxious but satisfied. If there was a story to tell, it was better that the poor girl should tell it, at least when she was full mistress of herself—not now, betrayed by her weakness, when she might say what she would regret another time.

But Lily asked no more for Sir Robert. It was but the first impulse of her suddenly awakened mind. She relapsed into the weakness which was all the greater for that brief outburst, and lay for days conscious and so far calm, that she had no strength for agitation, often sleeping, seldom thinking, wrapped by nature in a dream of exhaustion, through which mere emotion could not pierce. And thus youth and the devoted attendance of her nurses brought her through at last. It was October when she first rose from her bed, an advance in recovery which the women were anxious to keep back as long as possible, while the doctor on the other hand pressed it anxiously. "She will lose all heart if she is kept like this, with no real sign of improvement," he said. "Get her up—if it's only for an hour it will do her good."

"It will bring it all back," said Beenie, in despair. She stopped herself next moment with a terrified glance at him: but he knew how to keep his own counsel. And he gave no further orders on this subject. Lily, however, was not to be restrained. When she was first led into the

drawing-room, she went to the window and looked out long and with a steadfast look upon the moor. It had faded out of the glory of heather which had covered it everywhere when she last looked upon that scene. Nearly two months were over since that day, that wonderful day of fate. Lily looked out upon the brown heather, still with here and there a belated touch of colour upon the end of the long stalks rustling with the brown husks of the withered bells. The rowan trees gave here and there a gleam of scarlet or a touch of bright yellow in the scanty leaves, ragged with the wind, which were almost as bright as the berries. The intervals of turf were emerald green, beginning to shine with the damp of coming winter. The hills rose blue in the noonday warmth with that bloom upon them, like a breaking forth of some efflorescence responsive to the light, which comes in the still sunshine, disturbed by no flying breezes. Lily looked long upon the well-known landscape which she knew by heart in every variation, resisting with great resolution the endeavours of Beenie to draw her back from that perilous outlook.

"Oh, look nae mair, my bonnie leddy," Beenie said. "You've seen it mair than enough, that awfu' moor."

"What ails you at the moor, Robina?" Sir Robert said, coming briskly in. "You are welcome back, my dear, you are welcome back to common life. Don't stand and weary yourself, I will bring you a chair to the window. I'm glad, Lily, that you're fond of the moor."

Lily turned to him with the same overwhelming smile which had nearly made an end of Sir Robert before, which shone from her pale face and from her wide, lucid, liquid eyes, still so large and bright with weakness—but she did not wait for him to bring her a chair to the window. She tottered to one that had been placed for her near the fire, which, however bright the day, was always necessary at Dalrugas. "I am better here," she said. She looked so fragile seated there opposite to him, that the old gentleman's heart was moved.

"My poor lassie! I would give something to see you as bright faced and as light-footed as when you came here."

"Ah, that's so long ago," she said. "I was light-hearted too, and perhaps light-headed then. I am not light in any way now, except perhaps in weight. It makes you very serious to live

night and day and never change, upon the moor."

"Do you think so, Lily? I'm sorry for that. I thought you were so fond of the moor. They told me you were out upon it when you were well, rambling and taking your pleasure all the day."

"Yes," she said, "it's always bonnie—the heather is grand in its time, and it's fine too in the gray days, when the hills are all wrapped in their gray plaids, and a kind of veil upon the moor. But it cannot answer, Uncle Robert, when you speak, or give you back a look or say a word."

"That's true, that's true, Lily. I was thinking only that it's a peaceful place, and quiet, where an old man like me can get his sleep in peace—though there's that Dougal creature with his pails and pony that is aye stirring by the skreigh of day."

"The pony was a great diversion," said Lily, "and Dougal too, who was always very kind to me."

"Kind! it was his bounden duty, the least he could do. I would like to know how he would have stood before me if he had not been kind and far more, to the only child of the old house."

"Thank you, Uncle Robert," said Lily, "for saying so: they were all kind, and far more than kind. They have just been devoted to me, and thought of nothing but to make me happy. You will think of that—in case that anything should happen."

"Lily," said Sir Robert, with an angry tone, "I'm thinking you're both ungrateful and unkind yourself. God has spared you and brought you back out of a dreadful illness, and these two women have nursed you night and day, and though I could do little for you, having no experience that way, yet perhaps I've felt all the more—and here are you speaking of 'anything that might happen,' as if you had not just been delivered out of the jaws of death."

"Yes, I am very grateful," said Lily, holding out her thin hand, "to both them and you, Uncle Robert, and most of all to you, for it was out of your way indeed: but as for God I am not sure that I am grateful to Him, for He might have taken me out of all the trouble while He was at it—and that would have been the best for us all.



But," she added, looking up suddenly with one of her old quick changes of feeling and countenance, "how should you think I meant dying? There are many many things that might happen besides that. I might go away, or you might send me away."

"I'll not do that, Lily."

"How do you know, Uncle Robert? You sent me away once before, when you sent me here. You might do it again—or, what is more, I might ask you—Oh, Uncle Robert, let me go away a little, let me leave the sight of it, and the loneliness that has broken my heart!" Lily put her transparent hands together and looked at him with a pathetic entreaty in her face.

"Go away," he said, startled, "as soon as I come here—the first time you come into the drawing-room, to ask that!"

"It is true," said Lily, "it's ungrateful, oh, it's without heart, it's unkind, Uncle Robert, as you say; but only for a little while, till I get a little better. I will never get better here."

"This is a great disappointment to me," he said, "I thought I would have you, Lily, to keep me company. I thought you would be my companion and take care of me for a year or two. I am not likely at my age to trouble anybody for very long," he added with a half conscious appeal for sympathy.

"And so I will," said Lily, "I will be your companion. I will be at your side to do whatever you please, to read or to write, to walk or to talk. I will look for nothing else in this world, and I will never leave you, Uncle Robert, and there is my hand upon that. But I must be well first," she added rapidly. "And I will never get well here. Oh, let me go! If it was but for a week, for a fortnight, for two or three days. Is it not always said of ill folk that when they get better they must have a change? Let me have a change, Uncle Robert! I want to look out at something that is not the moor. Oh, how long, how long, if you will only think of it, I have been looking at nothing but the moor. I am tired, tired of the moor. Oh, I am wearied of it! I have liked it well, and I will come back and like it again. But for a little while, uncle, only for a little while, let me go away from the moor."

"Is it so long a time?" he said. "I was not aware you had been here so long a time—why, it

is not two years! If you think two years is a long time, Lily, wait till you know what life is, and that a year's but a moment when you look back upon it."

"It looks like a hundred years to me," she said, "and before I can look back as you do it will be a hundred years more. And how am I to bear them all without a break or a rest? If I were even like you, a soldier marching here and there, with your colours flying and your drums beating! but what has a woman to do but to sit and think and count the days? Uncle Robert," she said, putting her hand on his arm as he stood near her, with his back to the fire, "I'm not unwilling at all to die. I would never have minded if it had been so. I would have asked for nothing but a warm green turf from the moor, and, maybe, a bush of heather at my feet. But it has not ended like that which would have been God's doing—only I will never get well unless I get away, unless I breathe other air: and if you refuse me, that will be your doing," she cried, with something of her old petulance and fire.

"Did the doctor say anything about this change?" Sir Robert asked Beenie, with a cloud upon his face.

"He said she was to be crossed in naething," Beenie replied.

#### CHAPTER XXXVIII.

WHEN it was settled that Lily was to have the change upon which she insisted, her health improved day by day—and with the increase of her strength, or perhaps as the real fountain-head and cause of her increased strength, her elasticity of spirit returned to her. By one of those strange gifts of temperament which triumph over everything that humanity can encounter, this young creature, overwhelmed by so many griefs, a deserted wife, a mother whose child had been torn from her, her secret life so full of incidents and emotion ending all at once in a blank—became, in the added grace of her weakness, and of the spirit and courage which overcame it, as sweet a companion to her old uncle, as full of variety and freshness as heart could desire. He indeed had never known such company before. She had been younger by an age when she left him in Edinburgh, less developed, half a child at least in his eyes—and

he had been surrounded by company and cronies of his own of a very different character. But now in this lonely spot, where there was nobody, Lily rising from her sick bed, with her eyes still large in their white sockets, her hands still transparent, her touch and her step still tremulous with weakness, became his diversion, his delight, making the long lonely days short, and even the rain supportable when it swept against the narrow windows, and intensified the brightness of the fireside and the pleasant talk, or even when there was no talk the sense of companionship within. Sometimes Lily would fall asleep in the afternoon or at the falling of the day, unawares in the feebleness of her convalescence, and perhaps these were the moments in which most of all the old man of the world felt completely what this companionship was. He would lay down his paper or his book and look at her, the light of the fire playing on her face, giving it a faint touch of rose and dissimulating the deep shadows under the eyes—feeling to his heart that most intimate confidence and trust in him, the reliance almost unconscious of a child, the utter dependence and weakness which could put up no barriers of the conventional, nor stop to think what would be agreeable: these things found out secret crevices in Sir Robert's armour, of which neither he nor any one else had dreamt. The water stood in his eyes as he looked at her, saying, "Poor lassie, poor little lassie," secretly in his heart. She was as good company then, though she did not know it, as when she started from her brief sleep, and exerted herself to make him talk, to make him laugh, to feel himself the most interesting of raconteurs and delightful of companions. Many people had flattered Sir Robert in his day—he had been important enough in much of his life for that—but he had never found flattery so sweet as Lily's demands upon the stores of his long experience: her questions upon his history, her interest in what he told her. It was not only that she was herself such a companion as he had not dreamt of, but that he never had been aware before what excellent company he was himself. He almost grudged to see her growing stronger, though he rejoiced in it from the bottom of his old world-worn heart.

"And so you are going to leave me, Lily—you've settled, that Robina-woman and you—and you're off in two days seeking adventures."

"Yes, uncle—in two days—but only for a little while."

"Without a thought of an old man left desolate—upon the edge of the moor."

"Yes, with a thought that is very pleasant—that there's somebody there wanting me back—" she paused a moment with a faint sigh and added, "and that I am coming back to, in a little while. And then, as for the moor, it is full of diversion. You're never lonely watching the clouds and the shadows and all the changes: I have had much experience of it, Uncle Robert—two years—that were sometimes long, long."

"I never knew," said Sir Robert, a little abashed, "how lonely it was, Lily, and that all the old neighbours were gone. I pictured you surrounded with young folk, and as merry as the day was long."

"It was not exactly that," she said with a smile, and then her face changed as it did from moment to moment like the moor which she loved, yet hated—shadows flying over it as swift, as sudden, and as deep. "But it's all past and why should we think more of it? When I come back, Uncle Robert, we'll be cheery, you and me together by the fireside all the winter through, and never ask whether there are neighbours or not—or other folk in the world."

"I would not go so far as that," said the old gentleman. "We'll get the world to come to us, Lily, a small bit at a time. But you have never told me where you are going when you leave me here."

"To Edinburgh," she said.

"To Edinburgh! I thought you had consulted with the doctor, and were going to the sea-side or to the Bridge of Allan, or some of the places where invalids go."

"Uncle," said Lily, "I have been two years upon the moor—and in all that time I have not got a new gown, nor a bonnet, nor anything whatsoever. Oh, yes, we will go to the sea, or the Bridge of Allan, or to some place. But we are not fit to be seen neither Beenie nor me. You do not take these things into consideration. You think when I speak to you like a rational creature that I am above the wants of my kind—but rational! or not, a woman must always have some clothes to wear."

Sir Robert laughed and clapped his hands.

"Bravo, Lily," he cried, "you cannot do better, my dear, than own you're just a woman and are as fond of your finery as the rest. By all means then go to Edinburgh and fit yourself out—but do not stay there, go out to Portobello, if you do not care to go farther, or a little more to the West where it's milder, and you will get a warm blink before the winter weather sets in. And that reminds me that you will want money, Lily."

"A good deal of money, Uncle Robert," she said with a smile. "You know I have had none for two years."

It was with a sensation of shame that he heard her allusions to those two years, and perhaps Lily was aware of it. She wanted money, she wanted freedom, and that her steps should not be watched nor her movements constrained. And the old gentleman was startled and humiliated when he realised that his heiress, his only relation, his brother's child, had been banished to this wilderness without a shilling in her pocket, or a friend to help her. He could not imagine how he could have forgotten so completely her existence or her claims upon him, and right to his support. He was glad to wipe that recollection from his own mind as well as hers by his liberality now. And Lily received from him an order upon his "man of business" in Edinburgh, for an amount which seemed to her almost fabulous—for she knew nothing of money, had never had any, nor required it, although when she retired to her room with that piece of paper in her hand which meant so much, the reflection of what might have happened and what she could have done had she only at any time during these two years possessed as much or half as much, came upon her with almost a convulsive sense of opportunities lost. She flung herself upon Beenie's shoulder when she reached the safe shelter of her room, where it was no longer necessary to keep herself up and make a smile for her uncle. "Oh, Beenie," she cried, "if he had given me the half of that before, or the quarter! how everything might have been changed."

"Oh, mem, my bonnie leddy," cried Beenie, who never now addressed her mistress as Miss Lily, "it's little, little that siller can do."

Anger flashed in Lily's eyes. "It could just have done everything!" she said. "Do you think I would have been put off, and off, if I could have

put my hand in my pocket and taken the coach and gone, you and me, to see to everything ourselves? Oh! many a time I have wished for it, and longed for it—but what could we do, you and me, and nothing, nothing, to take us there? Oh, never say siller can do little. It might have spared us all that's happened—think! all that's happened! I might be thinking now, as I thought yon New Year's time in the snow. I might be as sure and as full of trust. I might never have learned what it was to deceive and to be deceived. I might never have been a desolate woman without man or bairn—without my little bairn, my little baby."

"Oh, my darlin' leddy: but you'll get him again, you'll get him again," cried Beenie, with streaming eyes.

"I hope in God I shall," said Lily tearless, lifting her eyes and clasping her hands. "I hope in God I shall or else that He'll let me just lay down my head and die."

"He has raised you up from the very grave," said Beenie. "We had nae hope, Katrin and me, we had nae hope at all. Here she is hersel' that will tell you. There was ae night—oh, come Katrin, come and bear me out—when you and me just stood over her, and kissed the bonnie white face on the white pillow, and wrung each other's hands and said, 'If the baby's lost and her reason gane, God bless her, she'll be better away.'"

"Whisht with your nonsense," said Katrin, "that's a' past, and now we have nae such thoughts in our heads: but what will you do, my dear leddy, my bonnie leddy? Will ye bring him back here? A fine thriving bairn like yon, you canna hide him: the first day—the first night, and the secret would be parish news. I was frightened out of my wits the first days, for Dougal, who is not a pushing man, to do him justice, or one that asks questions—but with Sir Robert in the house, oh, mem, my bonnie dear, what will ye do?"

"I have never wanted to make any secret, Katrin," Lily said.

"I ken that—but there will be an awfu' deal to tell when once you begin. And the bairn he is an awfu' startling thing to begin with. Do ye no think an auld gentleman like Sir Robert had better be prepared for it? It would give him a shock—it might even haim him in his health. I would take counsel about it. Oh, I would take counsel! Do naething in a hurry, not to scan-

dalise the country, nor to give our auld Maister a fright that might do him harm."

"To scandalise the country," said Lily, pale with anger. "Oh! to think it's me, me, that she says that to! Do you think it is better to deceive everybody and be always a lie whatever way you turn?"

"Mem," said Katrin, "my dear, you'll excuse me, I must just say the truth. It's an awfu' thing to deceive as you say—and well I ken it was never your wyte. But the worse of it is that when you begin you cannot end. You just have to go on. I'm no saying one thing or another, it's no my business, if it wasna that I just think more of you than one mortal creature should think of another. Oh! just take thought and take counsel! The Maister is an old man. You've beguiled him with your winsome ways just as you've beguiled us a'. Can I see a thing wrong you do, whatever it is? And yet I have a glimmerin' o' sense between whiles. If he's looking for you back to be his bonnie Lily and his companion, and syne sees you come in with a bairn in your arms, and another man's name—what will the auld man do? Oh, mem, the dear bairn, God bless him, and grant that you may soon have him in your arms! But if you hold by the auld gentleman and his life and comfort, for God's sake take thought! for that is in it too."

"There is nothing, nothing," cried Lily, "that should keep a mother from her bairn. You are a kind woman, Katrin, but you've never had a bairn. When once I get him here, how can I ever give him up again?" she said, straining her arms to her breast as if the child was within them. Beenie wept behind her mistress's shoulder, overwhelmed with sympathy: but Katrin shook her head.

"When you see Mr. Lumsden there, and go over it all—"

Lily's face became instantly as if the windows of her mind had been closed up. Her lips straightened, her eyes became blank. She said nothing but turned away, not looking at either of them nor saying a word. "And it was no me breathed his name or as much as thought upon him," Beenie said, a little later in an aggrieved tone, when she had rejoined Katrin downstairs.

"It was me that breathed his name, and I'll do it again till some heed is paid to what I say. We

should maybe have refused yon day to be his witnesses: but being sae, Beenie, the burden is on you and me as well as on him. They should have owned each other and spoke the truth from that day. But now that it has all gone so far and no a whisper risen, and the countryside just as innocent as if they were two bairns playing, oh, I wouldna now just burst it all upon the old man's head! He's no an ill auld man. He's provided for all her life—he is very muckle taken up with her now, maybe in a selfish way, for he's feeling his age and his mainy infirmities, and he's wanting a companion. But, oh! I would not burst it on him now! He could never abide her man: and, to tell the truth, Beenie, I'm not that fond of him mysel', and she, poor thing, has had a fearfu' opening to her eyes. How could ye have the bairn here and no the father? Could she say to her uncle I was very silly about him once and married him: and now I canna abide him? Oh, no! that is what she will never say."

"And I hope she'll never think it either," Beenie said.

"Beenie," said the other solemnly, "you are a real innocent if such a thing ever was."

"No more than yoursel'," said Beenie indignant: but she had to return to her mistress, and further discussion could not be held on this question.

They went away on the second morning which was a little frosty, though bright. The establishment had widened out by this time. Sir Robert was not a man to be driven to kirk or market in the little geeg drawn at his wilful pleasure by Rory, which had answered all Lily's purposes. There was now a phaeton, and a brougham, and three or four horses accommodated *tant bien que mal* in the old stables, which had to be cleared of much rubbish and Dougal's accumulations of years, before they were in a state to receive their costly inmates. It was in the brougham that Lily, wrapped up in every kind of shawl and comforter, drove with her maid to Kinloch-Rugas to take the coach, where the best places had been reserved for them. Beenie's pride in this journey exceeded the anxiety with which her mind was full, in respect to her mistress's health in the first place—and the many issues of their journey. But it was not a 'pride' which met with much sympathy from her dear friends and fellow servants. Dougal for his part stood out in the stable-yard carefully isolated from all pos-

sible connection with the new grooms and the new horses, though neither was he without a thrill of pride in the distinction of a kind of part-proprietorship with Sir Robert in these dazzling articles. He kept apart, however, with an air of conscious superiority to such innovations. "I wish ye a good journey," he said, "maybe it'll be warmer this fine morning in a shut-up carriage—but lord! I would rather have Rory and the little geeg than all the coaches in England."

Lily was thrilling with nervous excitement, scarcely able to contain herself, but she made an effort to give a word and a smile to the whilom arbiter of all the movements of Dalrugas. "I would rather have you and Rory in the summer weather," she said: "if it is a warm day when I come back you will come for me, Dougal."

"Na, mem, no me—we're no grand enough now to carry leddies: which I wouldna care much for, for leddies, as ye ken, are whiles fantastic and put awfu' burdens on a beast—but just because his spirit is broken with trailing peats from the hill, and visitors' boxes from the town. They're sensitive creatures pownies. I just begin to appreciate the black powny's feelings now I see the effect upon my ain."

"He shall drive me when I come back," said Lily, waving her hand as the brougham flashed away, the coats of the horses shining in the frosty sunshine, and the carriage panels sending back reflections. It was certainly more comfortable than the geeg. But the light went out of Lily's face as they left Dalrugas behind. The little colour in her cheeks disappeared. She leaned back in her corner and once more pressed her arms against her breast. "Oh, shall I find him? shall I find him?" she cried.

"You'll do that—wherefore should you no do that?" said Beenie encouragingly.

"He'll be grown so big we will not know him, Beenie, and he will not know his mother: that woman Margaret that took him away will have all his smiles—she will be the first face that he sees, now that he's old enough to notice. Oh, my little bairn! my little bairn!"

"A bairn that is two months auld takes but little notice, mem," said Beenie, strong in her practical knowledge. "You need not fash your head about that. They may smile—but if ye were to ask me the very truth I wouldna hide from you

that what they ca' smiling is just in my opinion the—"

"If you say that word I will kill you!" cried Lily. She laughed and then she cried in her excitement. "How will I contain myself? how will I keep quiet and face the world, and the folk in the world and everybody about? till the moment comes—oh, the moment, Beenie, when I will get my baby into my arms."

"Eh, mem! but you must not make yoursel' sae awfu' sure about that," said Beenie. "We might not find them just at first—or he might have a little touch of the cauld, or maybe the thrush in his wee mouth, or measles, or something. You must not make yourself so awfu' sure."

"He is ill," cried Lily, seizing her in a fierce grip. "He is ill, oh, you false, false woman, and you have never said a word to me."

"There is naething ill about him—he is just thriving like the flowers. But I canna bide when folk are so terrible sure. It seems as if you were tempting God."

"It's you that are tempting me—to believe in nothing, neither Him, nor women's word—but what would make a woman deceive a baby's mother about her own child? A man might do it, that knows nothing about what that means: but a woman never would do it, Beenie—a woman that has been about little babies and their mothers all her days?"

"No, mem, I never thought it," said Beenie, in dutiful response.

At the coach, where they were received with all the greater honour on account of Sir Robert's brougham, and the beautiful prancing horses, Helen Blythe met them. "They would not let me come to see you," she said. "It's long, long, since I've seen you, Lily, and worn and white you've grown—but just as bonnie as ever: there comes up the colour just as it used to do—but you must look stronger when you come back."

"I am going away for that," Lily said.

"And it is just the wisest thing she could do," said the doctor, who had come also to see her off. "And stay away as long as you can, Miss Ramsay, and just divert yourself a little. You have great need of diversion after that long time at the old Tower."

"She is not one that is much heeding diversion," said Helen, looking at her affectionately.

"We're all needing it whether we're heeding it or no," said the doctor. "And if you will take my advice you will just take a little pleasure to yourself as you would take physic if I ordered it. Good-bye, Miss Ramsay, and mind what I say."

"He's maybe right," said Helen, "they say he's a clever man. I know little about diversion. But, oh! I would like to see you happy, Lily—that would be better than all the physic in the world."

"Perhaps I will bring it back with me," said Lily, with a smile.

#### CHAPTER XXXIX.

IT was not with a very easy mind that Ronald Lumsden had executed the great coup which had, so far as Lily was concerned, such disastrous consequences. He had been deeply perplexed from the moment of the baby's birth, nay, before that, as to what his future action was to be. It had been apparent to him from the first that the child could not remain at Dalrugas: much had been ventured, much had been done, to all appearance successfully enough. No scandal had been raised in the countryside by his own frequent visits. What might be whispered in the cottages no one knew; but, apart from such a possibility, nothing that could be called public, no rumour of the least importance had arisen. Everything was safe up to that point. And he was not much concerned, even had there been any subdued scandal floating about. At any moment, should any crisis arise, Lily could be justified and set right. What could it matter indeed if any trouble of a moment should arise? He was not indifferent to his wife's good name. He considered himself as the best guardian of that, the best judge as to how and when it should be defended. He had (he thought) the reins in his hands, the command of all the circumstances. If he should ever see the moment come, when the credit of his future family should be seriously threatened and the position of Lily become an affair of vital importance, he was prepared to make any sacrifice. The moment it became serious enough for that, he was ready to act: but in the meantime it was his to fight the battle out to the last step, and to defend her rights, as her uncle's heir, and to secure the fortune for her behalf and his own. He regarded the

situation largely as from the point of view of a governor and supreme authority. As long as the circumstances could be managed, the world's opinion suppressed or kept in abeyance, and the one substantial and important object kept safe, what did a little imaginary annoyance matter, or Lily's fantastic girlish notions about a house of her own, and a public appearance on her husband's arm, wearing her wedding ring and calling herself Mrs. Lumsden? He liked her the better for desiring all that, so far as it meant a desire to be always with him—otherwise the mere promotion of being known as a married lady was silly and a piece of vanity, which did not merit a thought on the part of the arbiter of her affairs. All the little bye-play about the house which could not be got till the term, etc., had been a jest to him, though it had been so serious to Lily. He had never for a moment intended that she should have that house. To keep her quiet, to keep her contented, Ronald did not stint at such a small matter as a lie. Between lovers, between married people, there must be such things. If a man intends to keep at the head of affairs, and yet to keep the woman, who has no experience and knows nothing of the world, satisfied and happy, of course there must be little fictions made up and fables told. Lily would be the first to justify them when the necessity was over, when the money was secured and their final state arrived at, a dignified life together, with everything handsome about them. He had no compunctions, therefore, about the original steps. It might have been more prudent, perhaps, if they had not married at all, if they had waited till Sir Robert died and Lily was free, in the course of nature, to give her hand and her fortune where she pleased. That, no doubt, was a rash thing to do: but the wisest of men commit such imprudences. And, with the exception of that, Ronald approved generally of his own behaviour. He did not find anything to object to in his conduct of the matter altogether.

But the baby put everything out. The prospect indeed occupied Lily and kept her quiet and reasonable for a long time, but the moment he knew what was coming, a new care came into Lumsden's mind. A baby is not a thing to be hid. It was certain that nothing would induce Lily to part with it, or to be reasonable any

longer. She would throw away the result of all his precautions, of all his careful arrangements, of his self-denial and thought, in a moment, for the sake of this little thing, which could neither repay her nor know what she was doing for it. Many an hour's reflection, night and day, had he given to this subject, without seeing any way out of it. With all his powers and gifts of persuasion he had not ventured even to hint to Lily the idea of sending away the child. Courage is a great thing, but sometimes it is not enough to face a situation of the simplest character. He could not do it: after the child arrived, when the inconveniences of keeping it there became apparent, he had thought it might perhaps be easier: and many times he had attempted to arrange how this could be done, but never had succeeded in putting it into words. To do him justice, it was he who had sought out and chosen with the utmost care the nurse Marg'ret, in whose hands both mother and child would be safe, and he looked forward with that vague and foolish hope in some indefinite help to come, which the wisest of men, when their combinations fail, still believe in, like the most foolish: perhaps some suggestion might come from herself, who could tell? some sense of the trouble and inconvenience arising in Lily's own mind, might assist him in disposing of the little intruder. Why do babies thrust themselves into the world so determinedly where they are not wanted? Why resist the most eager calls and welcomes where they are? This confusing question was no joke to Ronald. It made him hate this meddling baby, though he was not without a young father's sense of pride and satisfaction too.

He had instructed Marg'ret fully beforehand in the part she might be called upon to play, though he could not tell her either how or when he would accomplish the purpose which had gradually grown upon him as a necessity. In these circumstances, while he yet pondered and turned everything over in his mind, failing as yet to perceive any way in which it could be accomplished, the suddenness of Sir Robert's coming, which he learned by accident, was like sudden light in the most profound darkness. Here was the necessity made ready to his hands. Lily could not doubt, could not waver: whatever might happen afterwards, it was quite clear Sir Robert could not be greeted on his first arrival by the voice of an infant—an infant

which had no business to be there, and whose presence would have to be accounted for on the very threshold, without any preliminary explanation—in the face, too, of his friends whom he brought with him, revealing all the secrets of his house. This was a chance which made Ronald himself, with all his coolness, shiver. And Lily, still in her weakness, not half recovered, what might the effect be upon her? It might kill her, he decided: for her own sake, in her own defence, not a moment was to be lost. The reader knows how he flashed into his wife's room in haste, but not able even then, in face of Lily's perfect calm, and utter inability to conceive the real difficulty of the situation, to suggest it to her, accomplished his design—secretly leaving her, not even then with any unkind intention, very sorry for her, but not seeing any other way in which it was to be done—to discover her loss and bear it as she might. He was anything but happy as he drove away with the traitor woman by his side and the baby hidden in its voluminous wrappings. Marg'ret was not such a traitor either as she seemed. She had been made to believe that though no parting was to be permitted, to agitate the young mother, Lily too was aware, and had consented to this proceeding. "The poor little lassie, the poor wee thing," Marg'ret had said, even while wrapping up the baby for its journey: and she had slipped out into the darkness and waited at the corner for the geeg, with a heavy heart.

It startled Lumsden very much that no wail of distress, no indignant outcry came from Lily on discovering her loss. These were not the days of frequent communications. People had not yet acquired the habit of constant correspondence. They were accustomed to wait for news, with no swift possibility of a telegram or even a penny post to make them impatient: not perhaps that they would have grudged—certainly not that Ronald would have grudged—the eightpence which was then, I think, the price of the conveyance of a letter from one end of Scotland to the other—but that they had not acquired the custom of frequent writing. When no protest, no remonstrance, no passionate outcry reached him for a week or two after the event, Lumsden became exceedingly alarmed. He said to himself at first that it was a relief—that Lily herself recognised the necessity and had yielded to it—but he

did not really believe this, and as the days went on, genuine anxiety and terror were in his mind. Had it killed her? Had his Lily, in her weakness, bowed her head and died of this outrage? the worst, he now felt in every fibre of his being, to which a woman could be subjected. He wrote, inclosing his letter to Beenie: then he wrote to Beenie herself, entreating her to send him a line, a word. But Lily was unconscious of everything, and Beenie of all that did not concern her mistress when these letters arrived. They were not even opened until Lily was convalescent, and then Beenie, by her mistress's orders, in her large sprawling handwriting, and with many tears, replied briefly to the three or four anxious demands for news which had arrived one after the other. Beenie wrote:—

"SIR,—

"My mistress has been at the point of death with what they call a brain fever. It has lasted the longest and been the fiercest that ever the doctor saw. She is coming round now—the Lord be praised—but very slow. She has but one thought—you will know well what that is—and will never rest, till she has got satisfaction, night or day.

"I am Sir,

"Your obedient Servant,

"ROBINA RUTHERFORD.

"P.S.—I was to tell you the last part, for it is not from me."

There was not much satisfaction to be got from this letter, and indeed his mind got little relief from anything, and the time of Lily's illness was a time of mental trouble for the husband, which was not perhaps more easy to bear. Had he lost her altogether? It seemed like that, though he could not think it possible that the child at least should be allowed to drop, or that the fever could have made her forget, which it was evident she had not done in his own case. The courts had begun again, and Lumsden was more occupied than he had ever been in his life. He made one furtive visit to Kinloch-rugas, where he heard something of Lily's state, and engaged Helen Blythe to communicate with him anything that reached her ears. But no one was allowed to see her in her illness, and this gave him small satisfaction. He did not dare to go near the house, which Sir Robert guarded more

effectually than a squadron of soldiers. There was nothing for him to do but to wait. The unusual rush of occupation which came upon him with the beginning of the session had a certain irony in it, that irony which is so often apparent in life. Was he about to become a successful man now that the chief thing which made life valuable was slipping out of his grasp? He went about his business briskly, and rose to the claims of his business and profession, so that he began to be mentioned in the parliament house and among his contemporaries, and even by elder men of still more importance, who said of him that young Lumsden, old Portalloch's son, though he had hung fire at first, was now beginning at last to come to the front. Was it possible that this was coming to him, this exhilarating tide of success, just at the moment when Lily, who would have stood by him in evil fortune and never failed him, had dropped away from his side? To do him justice, he had never thought of success, of wealth, of prosperity without her to share it. And he did not understand it now. He could not understand how even a woman, however ignorant or unreasonable by nature, could be so narrow as not to see that all he had done had been for the best. The last step, no doubt, might be allowed to be hard upon her, but what else was possible? Could she for a moment have entertained the idea of keeping the child—a baby that cried and made a noise, and could not be hid, at Dalrugas? Even if there had been no word of Sir Robert it still would have been impossible: and he had done no more than he had a right to do. He had considered, and considered most carefully—he did himself but justice in this—what as her head and guardian it was best for him to do. It was his duty as well as his right: and the responsibility being upon him as the husband and not upon her as the wife, he had done it. Was it possible that Lily—a creature full of intelligence on other matters, who even now and then picked up a thing quicker than he did himself—should not have sense enough and judgment enough to see this? But these thoughts, though they mingled with all he did and accompanied him night and day, did not make things any better. The fact that she had taken no notice of him all this time—that she had not written to him, even to upbraid him—that she had not even



asked him for news of the child, was very heavy on Lumsden's mind—almost, I had said, upon his heart—for he still had a heart, notwithstanding all that had come and gone. Perhaps it might have relieved him a little had he known that news had been obtained of the child, though not through him. Marg'ret who, though she had been unfaithful to the young mother, to whom at the same time she had been so kind—certainly had a heart which smote her much as being a party to a proceeding which became more and more doubtful the more she thought of it—had written twice to Beenie, altogether superior to the question of the eightpence to pay, to assure her of the baby's health. He was well, he was thriving, his mother would not know him, he had grown so big and strong, and Marg'ret hoped that ere long she would put him, just a perfect beauty, into his mother's arms. These queer missives, sealed with a wafer and a thimble, had been better than all the eloquent letters in the world to Lily. When those from Ronald, full of excellent reason and all the philosophy that could be brought to bear on the circumstances, were given to her on her recovery, they had but made her wound more bitter, and her resentment more warm: but the nurse's letters had given her strength. They had made her able to charm and please her uncle, they had enabled her to face life again and fight her way back to a certain degree of health, they had sustained her in her journey, and this first set out upon the world to manage her own affairs, which was as novel to her as if she had been fifteen, instead of twenty-five. They wanted only one thing—they had no address. The postmark was Edinburgh, but Edinburgh was (to these inexperienced women) a very wide word.

What Lily had intended to do when she had found out Marg'ret and recovered her child—as she was so confident of doing—I cannot tell. She did not herself know. This was the first step to be taken: everything else came a world behind. Whether she was to carry the baby back in her arms, to beard Sir Robert with it and make her explanation—though with the conviction that she would then be turned from the door of her only home for ever—or whether she intended, having escaped, to do what always seems so easy and natural to a girl's imagination, to fly away somewhere and hide herself with her child, and be fed

by the ravens, like the prophet—she herself did not know and I cannot tell. The only thing certain was that she thought of the little house among the Edinburgh roofs, that house which could only be got at the term, and which it now made her heart sick to think of—no more. Had she found the door open for her and everything ready, Lily would have turned her back on that open door. She could not endure the thought of it, she could not even think of the time when it would have been paradise to her, the realisation of her dearest hopes. In the depths of her injured soul she would have desired to find her child without even making her presence known to her husband. She had no desire even to see him again—he seemed to have alienated her too completely for any repentance. And up to this moment, her mind being altogether occupied by her child, none of those relentions towards those whom we have loved and who have wronged us, which make the heart bleed, had come upon Lily. She thought of nothing but her child, her child!—to have him again in her arms, to possess him again, the one thing in the world that was entirely her own, altogether her own. The fact that this was not so, that the child was not and never could be entirely her own did not disturb Lily's mind. Had she been reminded of it she would not have believed. She thought as every young mother thinks in the wonderful closeness of that new relation and the sense of all it has cost her, that to this at least there could be no contradiction and no doubt—that her baby was hers, hers! and that no one in the world had the right to him that she had. It was for him that she hurried, as much as anyone could hurry in these days, to Edinburgh, grudging every moment of delay—the time of changing the horses, which she felt inclined to get out and do herself, so slow, so slow was everybody concerned: the time for refreshments, as if one wanted to eat and drink when one was hastening to recover one's child. But however slow a journey is, the end of it comes at last. It was a comfort to Lily that she knew where to go to, to the house of a very decent woman, known to Beenie, who kept lodgings, and where she could be quite quiet, out of the way of her former friends. But they arrived only in the evening, and there was another long night to be gone through before anything could be done.

## CHAPTER XL.

ROBINA had become more and more anxious and uneasy as they approached Edinburgh. She did not seem to share the anxious elation with which her mistress hailed the well-known features of the country, and recognised the Castle on its rock, and the high line of houses against the sky. Lily was in a state of feverish excitement, but it was mingled with so many hopes and anticipations that even her anxiety was a kind of happiness. "To-morrow! To-morrow!" she said, to herself. Beenie listened with much solemnity to this happy tone of certainty. She would have liked to moralise and bid her mistress modify her too great confidence. As the moment approached when it should be justified, Beenie's mind became more and more perturbed. It was she who had been instrumental in bringing Marg'ret from Edinburgh, pretending, indeed, that the woman was her cousin, and she had till now taken it for granted, as Lily had done, without any doubt in her mind, that where Marg'ret had been found once she would be found again. But as the hour came nearer Beenie's confidence in this became much shaken. If *he* wanted to hide the child from his mother—a course which Beenie acknowledged to herself would be the wisest one, for how could the baby and Sir Robert ever live under the same roof?—would he have allowed the nurse to settle there, where her address was known, and she could be found in a moment? Beenie's intellect was not quick, but she did not think this was probable. She was not accustomed to secrecy or to the tricks of concealment: they had not even occurred to her till now: but when she realised that she was to be her mistress's guide on the next morning to the house where Lily had persuaded herself she was certain to find her child, her heart sank to her boots, and there was no more strength left in her. "And what if we dinna find her there?—and wherefore should we find her there?" Beenie asked herself. It stood to reason, as she saw now, that Lumsden would never have permitted her to remain. Why had she not thought of it before? Why had she come on such a fool's errand, to plunge her mistress only into deeper and deeper disappointment? Beenie did

not sleep all night, though Lily slept, in her great fatigue, like a child. She was terrified of the morning, and of the visit which she now felt sure would be in vain. Oh, why had she not seen it before? He must have known that the mother would not give up her child without an attempt to recover him ("Though what we are to do with him, poor wee man, when we get him!" Beenie said to herself), and he would never have left the baby where it could be found at once, and all his precautions made an end of. Beenie saw now, enlightened by terror, that this plan must have been in Lumsden's head all the time, though Sir Robert's sudden arrival gave the opportunity for carrying it out. She saw now that after all that had been done to keep the secret he was not likely to allow it to be thrown to the winds by the presence of the child at Dalrugas, if he could help it. She divined this under the influence of her own alarm and anxiety. And would he let the woman bide there in a kent place where she could lay her hands upon him whenever she pleased, night or day? Oh no, no, no! he would never do that, was the refrain that ran through Beenie's mind all the night. She had thought how delightful it would be to hear the clocks striking and the bells ringing, after the deep, deep silence of the moor. But this satisfaction was denied her, for all the bells and the clocks seemed to upbraid her for her foolishness. "Sae likely! Sae likely!" one of them seemed to say, in every chime. "Cheating himself! Cheating himself!" said another. And was there not yet one, heavier than the rest, St. Giles himself for anything she could tell, which seemed to echo out—"You fool, Beenie! You fool, Beenie!" over all the listening town.

"Oh, my bonnie leddy," said Beenie, when Lily, all flushed and eager with anticipation, took her place in the old-fashioned hackney coach that was to take them to Marg'ret's abode. This was in a narrow street, or rather, close, leading off the Canongate—one of those places hidden behind the great houses, which lead to tranquil little spots of retirement, and openings into the fresh air and green braes, which no stranger could believe possible. "Oh, my bonnie leddy, dinna, dinna be so terrible sure! I've been thinking a' the way—what if she should have flitted? There was nae address to her letter. She may have flitted to

another house. She may be away at other work."

"What! and leave my baby!" cried Lily, "when she said in her letter he was all her occupation, as well as all her pleasure. I almost forgave her what she's done to me for saying that."

"And so she did," said Beenie, doubtfully. "Oh, I'm no saying a word against Marg'ret—she would be faithfu' to her trust. But she might flit to another house for a' that. In Edinburgh the folk are aye flittin'. I canna tell what possesses them. Me—I would bide where I was well off, I would never think of making a change just for change's sake. But that is what they're aye doing here."

"Have you heard anything, Beenie?" cried Lily, turning pale. She had been so sure that the cup of joy was within reach—that the thirsting of her heart would be at once satisfied—that she felt as if a disappointment would be more than she could bear."

"Oh, mem," cried Beenie, producing a bottle of salts from her capacious pocket, "dinna let down your heart! I have heard naething. I was just speaking of a common fact that everybody kens. And if she had flitted, they would maybe ken where she had gone. Oh, ay, they would certainly ken where she had gone—a woman and a bairn canna disappear leaving no sign. It's not like a single person that might just be off and away, and nobody the wiser, mem! I am maybe just speaking nonsense, and we'll see her at her door in a moment, with our bonny boy in her arms."

Beenie, however, had succeeded better than she had hoped. She had conveyed to her mistress that sickening of the heart which, from the most ancient days of humanity has been the consequence of hope deferred. The light went out of Lily's eyes. She leant back in her corner, closing them upon a world which had suddenly grown black and void. She did not lose consciousness, being far too strongly bound to life by hope and despair and pain to let the thread drop even for a moment: but Beenie thought she had fainted, and, heartstruck with what seemed to her her own work, produced out of the reticule she carried a whole magazine of remedies—precious eau-de-Cologne, which was no common thing in those

days, and vinegar with a sharp aromatic scent, more used then than now, and even as the last resort—a small bottle of whiskey, which she tried hard, though with a hand that trembled, to administer in a tea spoon. Lily had strength enough to push her away, and, in self-defence, opened her eyes again: seeing grayly once more the firmament, and the high houses on either side, and the dull day from which all light seemed to have gone. It was she, however, who sprang out of the coach when it stopped at the entrance to the close. Everybody knows what the Canongate of Edinburgh is—one of the most noble streets, yet without question the most squalid and spoiled of any street in Europe, with beautiful stately old houses standing sadly among the hideous growths of yesterday, and evil smells and evil noises enough to sicken every visitor and to shame every man who has anything to do with such a careless and wicked sacrifice of the city's pride and ornament.\* But even in the midst of this disgraceful debasement there remain beyond the screen of the great old houses glimpses of the outlets which the old citizens provided for themselves, old courtyards, even old gardens, old houses secure within their little enclosures where the air is still pure and the sky still visible. Lily's heart rose a little as she came out of the narrow entrance of the close into one of these unexpected openings. If he were here he would be well. She could see the green beyond and the high slopes of Salisbury Crags. There was something in the vision of greenness, in the noble heights flung up against the sky, which restored her confidence.

But it was perhaps well that Beenie had spoken even so little adroitly on the way—for indeed Marg'ret was not found at her old address. She had never gone back there, they were told, since the time when she was called away in the summer to attend a lady in the North. She had not indeed been expected back. She had given up her rooms on going away, and removed her little furniture, and the rooms had been relet at once to a member of the same profession, who hoped to be sometimes mistaken for Marg'ret, a person of high reputation in her own line. The landlady

\* There is a scheme in consideration now, I believe, to restore that noble street out of its degradation to something like the stateliness of old, through the patriotic exertions of Professor Geddes.

knew nothing of the baby she had now to take care of nor where she was. The furniture? oh, yes, she could find out where the furniture had been taken, but Marg'ret herself, she felt sure, had never come back. She was maybe with the lady still—the lady in the North. She was so much thought upon that whiles they would keep her, if the baby were delicate, for months and months. She had a wonderful way with babies, the woman said. (At this, Lily who had been leaning heavily on her attendant's arm with her pale face hidden under her veil, and all her courage gone, began to gather a little spirit and looked up again.) Oh, just a wonderful way! They just thrive wi' her like flowers in May. What she did different from ither folk there was not one could tell: if it was the way she handled them, or the way she fed them, or the pittin' on o' their claithes, with fykes and fancies that a puir buddy with the man's meat to get and the house to keep clean had no time for. But the fack was just this, that there was nobody like Marg'ret Bland for little bairns. They were just a different thing a'thegither when they were in her hands.

As this little harangue went on, Lily's feeble figure hanging on Beenie's arm straightened itself by degrees. She put up her veil and beamed upon the homely woman who showed evident signs that she had little time, as she said, to keep herself tidy for one thing. Lily was not discouraged by so small a matter. She said, holding out her hand, "Then you would leave a baby in her hands and have no fear?"

"Eh, my bonnie leddy," cried the woman with a half shriek, wiping her hands upon her apron before she ventured to touch the lady's glove, "I would trust Marg'ret Bland maist to bring them back from the deid."

"We must find her, that is all," said Lily, as they turned away, Beenie trembling and miserable, with subdued sniffs coming from under her deep bonnet. Her mistress, in the petulance which neither anxiety nor trouble could quench, gave her "a shake" with her arm which still leant upon her's, though Lily for the moment was the more vigorous of the two. "We must find her, that is all! She must be clever indeed if she can hide herself in Edinburgh and you and me not find her, Beenie! We must search every street till we find her," Lily cried. The colour had come back to

her cheeks and the light to her eyes. That blessed assurance that, wherever Marg'ret might be, the baby was safe, doubly safe in her skilled and experienced hands, was to the young mother like wine. The horror of the disappointment seemed to be disguised, almost to pass away, in that unpremeditated testimony. If it was for to-morrow rather than for to-day so long as he was so safe, so well, so assured against all harm, as that! "We have only to find her," Lily said, dragging Beenie back to the hackney coach in which they immediately drove to the place where Marg'ret, now to be spoken of as Mistress Bland, had been supposed to place her furniture. But this was no more than a warehouse where the person in charge allowed disdainfully that twa' three auld sticks o' furniture in that name were in his charge, but knew nothing more of the wumman than just that they were hers, and that that was her name. Lily, however, was not discouraged. She drove about all day in her hackney coach, catching at every clue. She went to the hospitals where Mrs. Bland was known, but supposed to be still with the lady in the North who had secured her services in the summer.

"If you know where she's to be heard of," one of the matrons said, "I will be too thankful, for there is another place waiting for her or somebody like her."

"And is she such a good nurse as that?" cried Lily, glowing with eagerness all in a moment, though her face had relapsed into pallor and anxiety.

"She is one of the best nurses we have: and especially happy with delicate children," the matron answered with some astonishment. And she tapped Beenie on the shoulder and said an indignant word in her ear. "Woman!" she said, "are you mad to let your mistress wander about like this, when it's well to be seen she's just out of her bed, and in my opinion not long past her time."

"My mistress," said Beenie with a gasp, "is just a young lady—in from the country."

"Just you get her back as fast as you can," said the experienced woman, "or you'll have her worse than ever on your hands again."

But this was what Beenie could not do. She had to follow Lily's impetuous lead on many a wild goose chase and hopeless expedition here and there from one place to another during the rest of the day: and when they returned to their lodgings

worn out and cast down in the evening, it was still the mistress who had the most strength and spirit left. "There is only one thing to do now," she said, while Beenie placed her on the hard sofa beside the fire, and endeavoured to induce her to rest. Her face was very pale and her eyes very bright with a faint redness round the eyelids accentuating the absence of colour. "There is one thing to do: Mr. Lumsden," she paused a little after the name as if it made her other words more difficult or exhausted her breath: "will have come back now to his lodging. You know where that is as well as I do. You will go and tell him that he is to come to me here."

"Mem!" cried Beenie, in great perturbation.

"Did you think," said Lily, very clear, in a high scornful tone, "that I would come to Edinburgh and not see my husband? Is it not my duty to see my husband?—you will go to him at once."

"It is no that," cried Beenie, "I thought you would see him first of all. He's your man, oh! my dear, dear lassie—you're married upon him never to be parted till death comes atween you. I would have had you see him first of a' and weel you ken that: but now when you're wearied out body and mind, and nae satisfaction in your heart—and everything that is atween ye worse and worse by reason of muckle pondering and dwelling on it—Oh, mem, my dear, no to-night, no to-night! You have a sharp tongue, though you never mean it, and he is a gentleman that is not used to be crossed and has aye had his ain way. Oh, mem, he's a masterful man, though he's never been but sweet as sugar to you. Try to take a sleep and rest, and wait for the morn. The morn is aye a new day."

"I am glad," said Lily, with shining eyes, "that you think I have a sharp tongue, Beenie: and you may be sure, if ever I meant it in my life, I will mean it now. But I will not discuss Mr. Lumsden with you or any one. You will just go to him—"

"Mem, let me speak once, if I'm never to say a word again," cried Beenie, "that your heart should be sore to see the dear bairn, to take him back into your arms, oh, that I can weel understand. So is mine, though I'm far, far from being what you are to him, and no to be named in the same breath. But, mem, oh, my dear leddy, my bonny Miss Lily, if I may just say that once again! What will ye do with him when you have him?"

Oh, let me speak—just this once. You canna, canna take him to that auld gentleman at hame—you canna do it. He has maybe not been much to you in the years that are past, but he's awfu' fond of you now. He looks to you to make him a home, to be the comfort of his old age. Oh! I'm no saying he deserves it at your hands. But what do the best of us deserve? We just get what we dinna deserve from God the first and sometimes from a tender he'rt here below. And he is an auld man and frail, he has maybe no long to live. Will you tell him a' that long story, how we've deceived him and the whole world, and about your marriage, and about the birth, and a' in his house that he meant for such different things?"

"Beenie," said Lily, "stop, or you will kill me: if I have deceived him so long, it was with no will of mine. Oh, God knows, if none of you know, with no will of mine nor yet intention! Is that not the more reason that I should deceive him no longer? He may turn me away, what will that matter? We will be poor creatures the two of us, you and me, if we cannot help ourselves and the darling bairn."

"But it will maitter to him," said Beenie, steadily, "the poor auld gentleman in that lonely house. He's been a kind of a father to you, if no so tender a father as might have been. I'm no saying you should have deceived him—but that's done and it canna be undone. If you tell him now, it will maybe kill him at the hinder end—and whether that will be better, you must just think for yoursell—for I have said all that I'm caring to say."

Lily had covered her face with her hands—and there was a moment of silence, unbroken save by a sob from Beenie, who naturally, having spoken forth her soul, was now crying as if her heart would break.

"Beenie," said Lily all at once, looking up, "you will go to Mr. Lumsden, who will be now at his lodgings dressing, I would not wonder, to go out to dinner—that is what is most likely—and tell him I am here. I would not wish to make him lose his engagement if he has one—you can say that."

("Oh, mem!" murmured Beenie under her breath.)

"But when it suits with his convenience I would like to see him, to ask him a question or two. Go

now, go," she said impatiently, "or you will be too late."

Weeping, Beenie went forth to do her mistress's behest. Weeping, she put on her big bonnet with a veil over it of a kind of Spanish lace, with huge flowers, which was the fashion of the day, and which allowed here and there a patch of her tearful countenance to appear, blocking out the rest. She found some difficulty in gaining admittance to Ronald, who was, his landlady informed her, "dressing to go out to his dinner," as Lily had foretold, and it was in the full glory of evening dress that he came forth upon her after she had fought her way to his sitting-room, and had waited some time for his appearance. He was very much startled by the sight of her, and came up taking her hand, demanding, "Lily—how is my Lily?" with an energy and anxiety which partly quenched Beenie's unreasonable exasperation at the sight of his dress.

"She is here, sir, and wishful to see you," said Beenie, "when it's convenient to you."

"Lily here—where? What do you mean? Convenient!—do you mean she is at the door?"

"It is not likely, sir," cried Beenie, with indignant disgust.

"What do you mean, woman? Lily who, you wrote to me, was just recovered from a nearly fatal illness!"

"And that's true—her blood would have been on the head of them that brought it on her—if it had not been for the mercy of God."

"Where is she?" cried Lumsden, seizing his hat.

"She said," said Beenie, with much intensity, "'He will most likely be going out to his dinner. I will not have him break his engagement for me.'"

"I think," he cried, "that you mean to drive me mad! Where is she—does anyone know she is here?"

"It is known she is here," said Beenie, sententiously, "to get change of air, as is thought, after her long, long illness: but, in fact, to look for her dear little bairn, which is the object in her ain mind, my poor bonny leddy. And oh! sir, if ye ken where the baby is—as ye must ken, having taken

the responsibility upon your hands—for we canna find him, we canna find him! and it will just break her heart and she will die!"

"Here—and looking for the child without consulting me!" he said, with an exclamation of anger and astonishment. He flung on a coat rapidly, and, almost thrusting Beenie out of the room before him, hurried her away. A few more questions put to her as they hastened along the streets showed him exactly the state of the case. It was no running away. Lily had not come to him to throw herself upon his mercy, to be owned and established and have her child restored to her in the legitimate way. Had it been so, it would have been very difficult to reject her, to silence her prayer and send her back, without losing hold upon her altogether. Had he lost hold upon her altogether without that? He was very much alarmed, but yet he felt that the situation was less impossible than if she had come to demand her place at his side and public acknowledgment. She did not want him—she wanted her baby; and what without him could she do with her baby; how produce it, how account for it? Ronald began to feel more at his ease, to feel himself again master of the situation as he hurried Beenie, who was very tired and wretched, and scarcely able to keep up with him, to Lily's refuge. Let no one suppose for a moment that he meant to disown her, that any dishonour was in his thoughts. In the last resort, if nothing else was to be done, Ronald had no intention but to stand faithfully by his wife. He had not indeed any power of doing otherwise: for was there not Mr. Blythe and the two witnesses and the marriage lines against him? But, as a matter of fact, he never thought of that, although he breathed more freely when he knew no such claim was intended, and felt once again that the helm was in his own hands.

But in the meantime how to meet Lily was occupation enough for his thoughts. He walked along the darkling streets, with the wind in his face and a whirlwind of thought in his mind. How was he to meet her—what was he to say to her? It was an interview on which might depend the whole after course of his life.

*(To be continued).*



SUMMER.



# DRESS AND CLOTHING IN THE OLDEN DAYS.

BY H. A. PAGE.

AS a general rule, it may be said that there was little change in dress or fashion till towards the thirteenth century. Both sexes had recourse to much the same fabrics, alike in samite and baldekyn, of which there were two kinds, silk and golden. Some have supposed that samite was a kind of satin, with a glimmering effect due to its gloss and smoothness. Our readers will remember the fine use Lord Tennyson makes of the samite, as worn by the Lady of the Lake when receiving the sword of Excalibur, as when giving it :

“There rose an arm from out the bosom of the lake,  
Clothed with white samite, mystic, wonderful.”

There were several silks in vogue at an early period : damask, so named from the place of its origin, Damascus, was no doubt figured, and hence, in later times, the name damask was applied to figured linen, which, in fine kinds, bore a similar shine to that of the satin ; taffeta was a common sort of silk. In woollen fabrics there were camlet, much in use for common wear ; kersey, a finer kind of cloth than camlet. Cotton was early in use, both as web and sewing thread. In linen there was cambric (from Cambray, where it was made), buckram, used for linings ; holland and sindon, canvas and dowlas, much used in the kitchen and for servants. These were the more important of the fabrics in use. Professor Thorold Rogers tells us that all kinds of clothing were very dear and linen especially so.\*

It would require a big *volume* to tell of all the variations and refinements that arose in the later centuries of the middle ages, so that it is perhaps fortunate that little difference is to be detected between the dress of Saxons and Normans at the time of the Conquest. The costume is very familiar to us through reproductions of parts of the famous Bayeux tapestry and illuminations of the time. But by the middle of the twelfth century the ladies had begun to indulge in a variety of fantastic adornments. The outer robe was long, covering the feet, and was confined with knots of ribbon ; the inner habit fitted tight, buttoned or laced in front, with great wide hang-

ing sleeves, and sometimes the veil was used. Sometimes, too, close caps were worn on the head, the hair hanging down in two long plaits, tied often with party-coloured ribbons or in silken tubular cases.

The injurious practice of tight-lacing was introduced by the Normans in the twelfth century, and the girdle and kirtle were much to blame for it. In the Lay of Sir Launfall we read :—

“Their kirtles were of jude sendell  
Y-laced small, jolyf and well.”

And in the romances and songs of the period, a small waist is celebrated as something greatly to be admired—a thing which was much helped by the cote-hardie—a part of dress, tight-fitting, which both men and women affected for a considerable period.

Queen Eleanor, wife of Edward I., is said to have introduced the wimple or gorget—the band of cloth under the chin, which became common, so that the wimple of the nun of to-day, as we see her, is simply a survival of what was ordinary dress at this time.

It is very odd to notice how, in some ways, the changes in the costume of the men react on that of the women. In place of the plate-armour for the knight, chain-armour came in fashion, and over it a sleeveless tunic of fine material, and the chain-armour, too, was sometimes mixed with plate-mail, and, in that case, the open flowing surcoat took the place of the close sleeveless tunic, the helmet becoming something more barrel-shaped, and rising higher, very far from graceful. This helmet, it would seem, is actually what the ladies took to imitate in their head-dresses, building up a kind of frame-work, helmet-like, the folds of the gorget or wimple covering the throat, exactly as did the chain-mail on the knight, and above it rose two unsightly protuberances, which the satirists sometimes irreverently called “rams’ horns.”

This structure was covered with silk, satin, or other material, the ends of which fell down as a kind of veil from the back and sides. This gave place in the latter part of the 14th century to one



broad horn, tapering to a point as it went up higher, and sometimes rose to the height of a foot and a-half, or even more, and, as in the case of the horns, a kind of veil falling from it behind. In the early part of the 15th century this was



abandoned, and the hair which, during this extravagant fashion, had been completely concealed by the head-dress and wimple combined, was once more allowed to appear a little, though still confined in a net of gold or silk, as it had been prior to the advent of the horns, single and double; but over this behind was stretched a frame from which a kind of wings projected. In the reign of Henry VII. the ladies abandoned these fantastic head-dresses, and adopted something of the simplicity of nature, the hair being free.

The dress itself continued to be long, sometimes made loose and confined at the waist by a band or girdle when necessary; and now and then those flying arm-pieces, called heraldically, *maunches*, were in vogue.

Amid all this, the polished mirror was but a poor substitute for the looking-glass; while already dyes, face-washes, paints and curling irons were much in vogue among fashionable folks.

In a sense, truly, there is nothing new under the sun. The modern system of calls was not then in practice, but they had what served them in good stead of these, meetings on set occasions, when the finest style of ceremonial dress was worn: and they had *this* advantage over our later style that hats, caps, and hoods really were a protection for the head.



In 1363, the 37th year of the reign of Edward III., an Act was passed by the Parliament against the general usage of apparel not suited either to the degree or income of the people: and it was laid down for each degree the amount they were not to exceed in clothing themselves. Tradesmen, artificers, and others, were not to wear cloth that cost more than 40s. the whole cloth; esquires and gentlemen, not possessed of lands or tenements of the yearly value of 400 marks, were not to exceed 4½ marks for the whole cloth, and should not wear any cloth of gold, silk, or silver, nor any sort of embroidered garment, nor any ring, buckle, *nouche*, ribbon, nor girdle. Merchants, citizens, burgesses, as well in the City of London as elsewhere, who possessed 500 marks in goods and chattels, were allowed to use the same clothing as esquires and gentlemen who have a yearly income of 100 marks; knights, possessed of lands and tenements to the yearly value of 200 marks, were to be allowed to spend on cloth not more than 6 marks. Labourers and the lower classes, whose goods were not worth more than 40s., should wear no other cloth but blankets and russets, not more than 12 pence the yard, and no other material for girdles than linen.

In the reign of Edward IV. another and similar law was passed, yet more severe. In this case, no servant or labourer was to wear garments the cloth of which exceeded 2s. the broad yard: and their wives were restricted to the same.

The time of Richard II. was one of great display and extravagance in dress. Then the frippery of the middle ages reached its height.

During the Crusades the apparel of the nobles became so outrageous that Richard, when sailing for Palestine, seriously protested, reminding them that such display was utterly unsuited for pilgrims to a holy place, and passing severe edicts against such practices. We fear, however, that they did not prevail, or, at any rate, effectively prevail, which is the less to be wondered at when we find that Richard himself, on occasion, could appear in very fine trappings indeed.

Immediately after the Crusades the passion for luxury and extravagance in dress reached such a height that, about the middle of the 14th century, a Parliament of Edward III. passed no fewer than eight laws against French fashions. Nigh a century later (in 1457), the passion for dress reached Scotland, when it was ordained that the wives and daughters of merchants should "be a-builzied (dressed, from 'habiller'), gangand and corresponsent for their estate, that is to say, on their heads short-curtes (a kind of cap), with little hudes, as are used in Flanders, England, and other countries . . . and that na woman wear tailles unfit in length, nor furred under, but on the hailie-daie (holy-day)."<sup>2</sup>

Chaucer's knight, however, as the poet tells us, was by no means brilliantly clad. He had just returned from one of the numerous expeditions on which he had adventured, and though he rode a good horse, was hardly, in appearance, in keeping with his high position.

"And though that he was, he was wys,  
And of his port as meke as is a mayde,

<sup>2</sup> Anderson, *Hist. of Commerce*, quoted by Lecky, ii., p. 286 (note).

He never yet no villineye ne sayde  
In al his lyf, unto no maner wight,  
He was a verray perfight gentil knight.  
But for to tellen you of his array,  
His horse was good, he ne was nought gay.  
Of fustyan he werede ycome a jepoun  
Al bysmotered with his habergeoun.  
For he was late ycome from his viage,  
And wenté for to doon his pilgrimage."

What the father lacked, the squire, his son,  
well made up for.

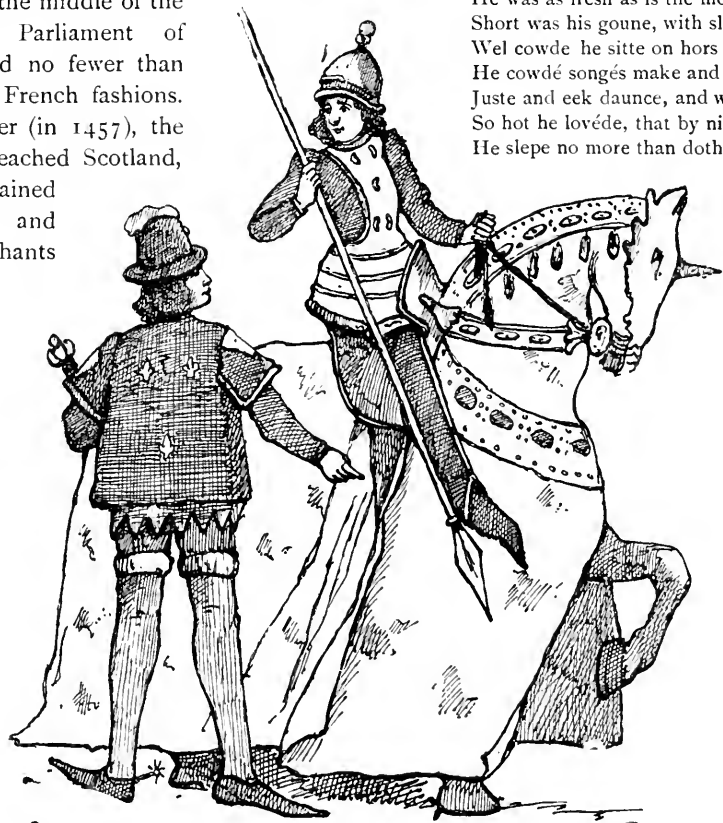
"Embrowded was he, as it were a mede  
Al ful of fresshé flourés, white and reede,  
Syngynge he was, or floytynge," al the day;  
He was as fresh as is the month of May.  
Short was his goune, with sleevés long and wyde.  
Wel coude he sitte on hors and fairé ryde.  
He coudé songés make and wel endite.  
Juste and eek daunce, and wel purtrei and write.  
So hot he lovéde, that by nightertale  
He slepe no more than doth a nightyngale.

Curteys he was,  
lowly and servysable,  
And carf befor  
his fader at the table."

But there is nothing that has not both its advantages and disadvantages. Mr. Lecky, indeed, traces to the passion for luxury that arose after the Crusades, the development at once of industry and of opposition to the monastic system and the priesthood.

Occleve, the poet, is very severe upon sleeves in the reign of Henry IV., during which the fashions of the previous reign were little varied, and the sumptuary laws against excess of apparel as little regarded. In his poem, "Pride and Waste" (Clothing of Lordes Men, which is Azens [against] their Estate), he says:—

"But this methinketh an abusion  
To see one walk in a robe of scarlét  
\* Floytynge—fluting, i.e., playing the flute.



Twelve yards wide, with pendent sleeves down  
On the ground, and the furrur therein set  
Amounting unto twenty pounds or bett (better) ;  
And if he for it paid, hath he no good  
Left him wherewith to buy himself a hood.\*

An Act passed in the fourth year of the reign of Henry IV. forbade any man, not being a banneret or person of high estate, to wear large hanging sleeves, open or closed, excepting only "*gens d'armes, quand ils sont armez.*"\*

The gentlemen, when at table, during the 13th century and later, were arrayed in *cyclas* or overgarments, without sleeves ; very often they wore their hair long and flowing over their shoulders, and their faces closely shaved. The ladies wore the close-fitting cap, their hair confined in a net of gold or silken thread. The loose surcoat, in the 14th century, once more gave place to the tight-fitting *cotehardie* or *jupon* for the men.

Another very remarkable fashion was the pointed toes to the shoes, which, at length, reached such an excess that it was needful to tie them to the knees or to the upper part of the dress by little cords of gold thread or silk. This was the case with men and women alike, and in some of the drawings of parties in this fashion, it looks as though the fool or jester had his shoes made with toes even longer than the others, whether by way of satire or not it would be hard to say. The jester was in every way a privileged person if he were really also a wit and could cause laughter, as many good folks now are. Sumptuary laws wholly failed to put down this nuisance, though shoemakers in London were liable to a fine of 20s. for making points more than two inches in length. The clergy could also lay under a curse those who wore the long toes.

And the very horses, as it seemed, were made to follow suit in their trappings. Then it was that

the war-horse became magnificently caparized, beyond all that had gone before—covered with housings of embroidered cloth, reaching nearly to the ground, and these, later, were emblazoned or embroidered with many fantastic or armorial devices. The mention of the horse may seem out of place till you reflect that the trappings had to suit, in some measure, with the dress of the rider. As it was on this account that the horse was so splendidly arrayed, perhaps it will be admitted that the fact is better mentioned under the head of dress than anywhere else.

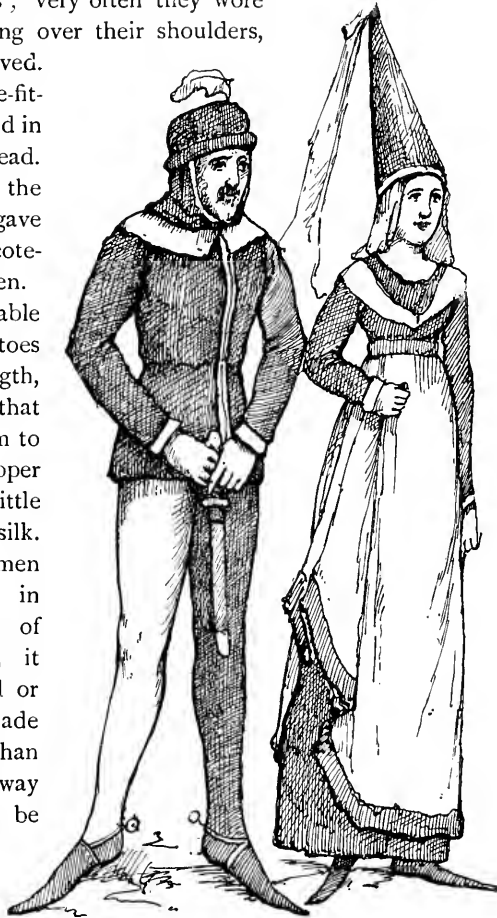
The ladies also showed their proneness to follow the cue given by the gentlemen in another respect. Early in the 14th century parti-coloured costumes came in vogue, and very shortly after, the ladies also came forth, like butterflies, in parti-coloured costumes.

We learn that, from 1380 to 1420, men and women wore long loose gowns, somewhat like dressing-gowns of our day, drawn in at the waist with a belt, and often richly embroidered in gold, with rambling patterns. They were finished up the neck and wrists by white frills. A cap with a high plume accompanied this gown—a costume perhaps the likeliest to that of women which men have ever worn in our country.

Our forefathers knew and wore a great variety of furs, and at one period nearly every variety of dress had more or less of fur trimming. These were ermine and min-

iver, sable, squirrel, Minx and wild cat. Lamb-skin and catskin were much used by the common people—more especially towards the 16th century.

Cloth of gold came into vogue in the reign of Henry VII., and, if possible, it was still more affected in that of Henry VIII. By the year 1536, mixtures of colour were the mark of rank. At this time we read that "Robert Whethall brags

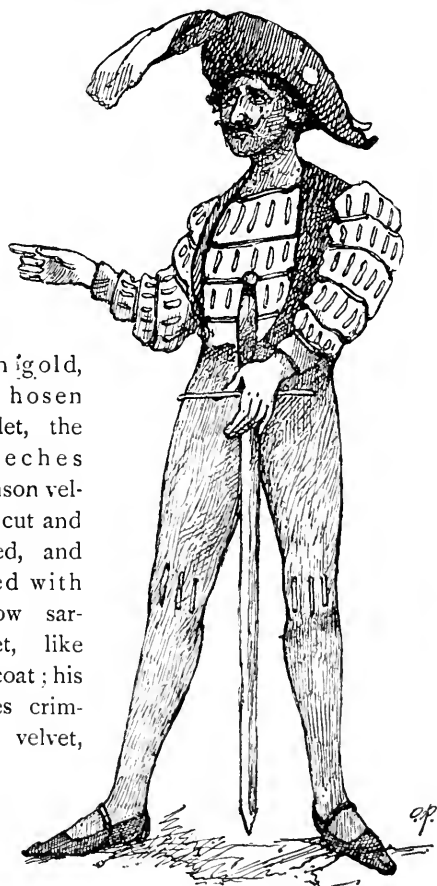


freshly in the Court in a coat of crimson taffeta,<sup>6338</sup> cut and lined with yellow sarcenet, a shirt wrought

other, distinctive costume was assumed and recognised—doctors, for example, had a long gown, edged with fur, a fur cape, and a cap somewhat of Phrygian type, and invariably carried a gold-headed cane; so also the lawyer, and costume of the priest, of course, and the monk, was invariably, according to the garb of his order. Various sumptuary laws had dealt with the peasants and craftsmen, at different times, and their garb varied within a very little range. It is very odd, indeed, to find that even the dress of the dead was at one time prescribed by law; for, in order to encourage the woollen manufacture, it was enacted that no corps (corpse) should be swathed in anything but sheep's wool, or the coffin lined with anything else.

The constant falling back on the attempt to stimulate industries by Acts enforcing certain cultures, or by sumptuary laws ordering what should and what should not be worn by the various classes, is exhibited all through the latter part of the middle ages, and the idea that such

with gold, his hosen scarlet, the breeches crimson velvet, cut and edged, and lined with yellow sarcenet, like his coat; his shoes crimson velvet,



and likewise his sword-girdle and scabbard; a cloak of red frisade, a scarlet cap with feathers, red and yellow. He hath many lookers-on." And no wonder: a perfect fop or *masher* of his time!

In the latter part of the 15th century the long robe in the case of gentlemen gave place to the tight-fitting short tunic, with a kind of band at the waist, or the loose surcoat, and the breeches which, like skin-tights, admirably showed the shape of the limbs, the figure ending in a modified pointed shoe. Out of this was developed the slashed and ornamented trunk hose, with the stuffed loin puffs of the time of Henry VIII., and with the loose upper coat or doublet, which is so familiar to us in pictures of that time, and made yet more familiar by the actual model of it still preserved in the livery of the beefeaters at the Tower.

As time went on, and as the various professions were more and more discriminated from each

ends could and surely by such maintained very for long

be safely attained means-re-strong after. So



slow are men to learn the economic lessons which laws, constantly operating, might force upon them.

## ABOUT GLOVE-MAKING.

BY BENJAMIN TAYLOR, F.R.G.S.

IN the Diary of Samuel Pepys occurs an entry to this effect: "Sir G. Downing told me he had been seven years finding out a man that would dress English sheepskin as it should be, and indeed it is as good now in all respects as kid; and he says that will save £100,000 a-year that goes out to France for kidd skins." Well, we have learned to dress sheepskin and a good many other skins since that time, but we still have recourse to France and Belgium, and Russia and Bohemia, for our hand-coverings. Of the Continent generally it may be said that Grenoble is the centre of the industry for kid gloves, Lyons for silk gloves, Chemnitz for cloth gloves, and Prague for lambskin gloves.

Now, in France kid gloves are not made from the skins of kids alone, but also from the skins of goats and sheep. It is even said that cat-skins are occasionally used, while rat-skins are very generally employed for the thumbs of ordinary gloves. Dog-skins are more extensively used in England than in France. While the very best qualities of kid gloves in the world are produced in France, that country also produces a very large quantity of the cheaper and coarser qualities of gloves in competition with Belgium and Germany.

Grenoble is famous for the quality of its gloves, and in this district it may almost be said that a glove-maker, like a poet, is born, not made. The element of heredity is here very marked, as it is in so many of our English crafts. The great portion of the population are the descendants of generations of glove-makers, and are born in the trade. Thus labour is not only in constant supply, but it constantly tends to perfection. Yet every operation in the craft requires a long and industrious apprenticeship. A "cutter" can only be developed after several years of close application under trained and experienced hands. His fingers must acquire a delicacy and nimbleness that nothing but practice, *plus* hereditary faculty, can give; and his sense of touch must be so accurate, that in an instant he can appraise the qualities and defects of each skin he handles. No two skins are precisely alike, and the skilled workman must know how to get the best possible results out of each piece with

all its flaws. A careless or inefficient workman may easily cause the loss of several francs a dozen in the gloves he is manipulating. Therefore only the best and most tried workmen are put on the best qualities, while the ordinary and indifferent workmen are confined to the common and inferior qualities.

The skins, however, have to undergo a vast amount of treatment before they reach the hands of the expert cutter. What are chiefly used in the district we are referring to are the skins of kids of from three to eight weeks old, the skins of lambs of from one to four months old, and the skins of roebucks of from four to eight months old. These are imported from all parts of the Continent, from Mexico, and South America, from Algiers and Morocco, and from Turkey-in-Asia, and India. Most of the imported skins are in a dry state (not salted), and have to be constantly turned over and over to prevent fermentation, and to get rid of mischievous insects, but some of the large glove manufacturers prefer to buy the raw skins and put them into the hands of a tanner before shipping them. In such cases the purchases are made abroad by some experienced member of the firm, or by a specially selected responsible agent. The general trade in skins, however, is carried on by middlemen, who buy abroad and take the risks of damage in transit.

The first process is to depilate the skins, *i.e.*, to get rid of the hair. This is done by means of a bath of lime, usually with a small admixture of sulphide of sodium or some other chemical agent, to accelerate the process. The time required for depilation occupies from ten to forty days, according to the character, quality, and condition of the skins.

The next process is to get rid of the lime, etc., of the depilating process, and for this repeated washings in pure clean water are necessary, with scouring, either in special pulling machines or by hand with peculiar knives. When thoroughly cleaned and freed from chemical matter, the skins are placed in a bath of water and bran, at a temperature of 100° F., where they are left two or three days to ferment. After fermentation they are ready for the tanner.

The tanning process is a very important one, and requires great care and dexterity in adapting the solutions to sizes, thicknesses, qualities, etc. The principal tanning agent employed is alum mixed with a little salt and the yolk of eggs. This mixture is worked up with wheaten flour, and the skins are worked with the compound (usually by the feet, as in an old wine-press, but often in large factories by a specially-constructed machine) until they become white and soft—"as soft as a glove," in fact. The consumption of eggs in this way is enormous—agents being employed all over France to buy up yolks. In the glove districts omelettes are notoriously pale and poor because the cooks can only afford to use one yolk out of two eggs.

The large glove-makers do their own tanning and dyeing. And the dyeing is another highly important process. For the best gloves only carefully-selected dye-woods are used. Aniline dyes are extensively used in Germany and Belgium, and are also used to some extent in France but only for the common qualities. These artificial dyes, they say, will not fix properly on the skins, and are liable to alter in shade on exposure to the air. Brilliancy is not a question of dye, but of the quality of the skin and of its preparation. The woods used are log-wood, Brazil wood, fustic and guercitron bark.

The skins are next dried, and as they dry they naturally stiffen and shrivel up. This result requires another operation—ironing out—which restores them to their original dimensions and softness. A good deal of the softness of the skin, as it left the tanner, may be lost by the carelessness of the dyer or by the use of improper dyes.

But now the skins are ready for the chief expert—the cutter. He takes them in his hand, one by one, and studies each separate piece carefully. Then he measures it to see exactly how much workable material it will yield, and skilfully cuts it into pieces, each piece sufficient to make one glove of some size or other. These cut pieces he proceeds to work and stretch and pare until each one exactly covers the model before him of the glove he is going to make. Then he places the pieces in sets of twelve, of uniform size, under a die, which at one stroke cuts out the form of the fingers and the button-holes. After which he carefully inspects each for flaws and defects, and sorts them ready for the sewers.

The sewing is done both at the factory and at the homes of the workers, but hand-sewing is now almost entirely discontinued in France. Three different kinds of machines are employed, wonderful inventions of a Frenchman called Brossère. The stitching is chiefly done by women, who earn from 50 to 70 francs a month, and by children, who earn from 20 to 45 francs. The wages of a first-class cutter run up to 160 francs a month.

In Grenoble alone are over one hundred glove factories, giving employment to upwards of 2,000 workmen and 20,000 stitchers. There are also three tanneries and twenty-five dye-works preparing skins for those makers who do not undertake these processes—also employing several hundreds of people. Altogether quite one-half of the entire population of Grenoble are directly engaged in some branch of the glove industry, not to speak of those employed in the work of packing and distribution.

The time required to make a kid glove from the raw skin is, roughly, about five months. Thus, the tanner (who usually treats bundles of 500 at a time) requires from 60 to 90 days; the dyer from 5 to 15 days; and the manufacturer, for cutting, finishing and packing, from 60 to 90 days.

In Bohemia, lambskins are almost exclusively used. They are in three classes—first, the skins of lambs a few months old; second, the skins of more mature but not full grown lambs; and third, the skins of the full-grown lambs. The second class is considered the best for glove-making, and supplies are drawn from the Danube Provinces and from Eastern Europe generally. The skin trade is in the hands of Oriental dealers, who bring the skins to the Vienna market in a dry or salted state—the dried ones being preferred.

The tanner places them in cement-lined pits, and runs soft water over them until they are sufficiently softened, the time required varying with the season and the condition of the skins. Then they are smeared with white lime on the under side, and again put into the water for a week or two to make them ready for depilation. After being depilated they are placed in a solution of animal excrement to decompose the impurities in the pores. The subsequent processes are very much the same as those above described—almost the same materials being used for softening and dyeing the skins.

The cutting at Prague is done by the French machines, and the stitching and back sewing is also done by machines. But glove-stitching is, as a rule, done in the homes of the seamstresses, not in the factory, and the price for sewing a pair of four-button gloves is about eight kreutzers, say three half-pence. It requires a good seamstress to earn as much as eight shillings a week at this rate. The greater portion, perhaps three-fourths of the Bohemian lamb-skin gloves, are exported to England. In and about Prague there are 120 glove factories, employing from 1,500 to 2,000 men and boys, besides the seamstresses.

In Russia all the fine gloves are made from foal-skins—the skins of lambs, sheep, goats, and kids being very little used. Yet the preparation of the foal-skins is said to be a very difficult and laborious matter, requiring a large amount of hand-work to render them soft and pliable. The work of preparing foal-skin is an art in which Russia has practically a monopoly. This may be due to the fact that labour is cheap in Russia, and that cheap labour is a *sine quâ non*, but the work requires an amount of perseverance and patient endurance that no other workers seem able to apply. At all events, attempts to introduce foal-skin tanning into France, Germany, and Belgium have proved uniformly unsuccessful. The peculiarity of these skins is that, when well-prepared, they are remarkably durable, as well as very delicate, and they take on almost all dyes equally well.

The process of depilation, &c., occupies five or six weeks, but no chemicals are used in Russia—only a mixture of flour and eggs and bran, for softening. After depilation the skins are hand-dressed on wooden blocks, and this is the most difficult and arduous part of the preparation. The dyeing is also done to a large extent by hand, the skins being brushed skilfully with a brush dipped in the prepared dyes, but light colours are dyed by immersion. Dyewoods are mostly used, aniline dyes only to a small extent when bright greens or violets are desired. The cutting is also done by hand in Russia, not by dies as in France; and the sewing is generally done by hand over a mould. Sewing by machines is sometimes done, but the work is not considered so good as by hand, although a machinist will stitch eight or nine pairs a day to the two or three pairs a hand-worker can manage. It is usually estimated that 500 foal-skins should yield from 1,200 to 1,500 gloves of the best quality.

Wash-leather, or chamois-leather gloves are made in Germany from doeskins and buckskins. The skins are depilated in a solution of lime, the hair and cuticle scraped off, and then they are filled for several days in whale oil. The grease has afterwards to be cleaned off by careful washing, and the leather is softened by stretching and working over rounded irons. Chamois-leather is not dyed, but is cut into glove shapes and sewn by machines.

## IF LOVE WERE ALL.

IF Love were all, would life be worth the living?

One long, sweet paradise of summer days,  
Of dalliance in a thousand dainty ways,

With mimic quarrel, rapturous forgiving:  
One flame-girt chrisom bearing answers low:

This is not love, for love elects to reign

With his twin brothers, Sacrifice and Pain.

Still bitter-sweet the mingled streams would flow,  
If Love were all.

O Life! with burning unassuaged desires,

And earthly dross of passionate human pain!

O Death! refining in thine altar fires,

Till pure the freed soul-phoenix doth remain,

What need of fear, whatever may befall,

If Love be all?

MAUD V. VERNON.

# ROYAL DIAMONDS.

BY EDWIN OLIVER.

AS we see the dazzling rays flash from the coroneted brow of royalty, or gleam upon the snowy arm of aged Cæsus' lovely bride, do we not in fancy endow those priceless gems with an almost supernatural birth? Whence come the white-gleaming toys, whose purity can rival the pale beams of an arctic star? Are they first fruits of summer dew, stored by gnomes and pixies for Titania's treasury?

or are they tears from the eye of a sorrowing angel, freezing at the touch of venal earth, for whose sins they fall? Place side by side a diamond of the first water and a common piece of charcoal, and we have light and its antithesis; the cold splendour of a Northern beauty and the black ugliness of the Mulatto serf: a triumph of the beautiful and the grotesque—yet one and the same in the component parts which give them substance. The two are twin brothers, Valen-

tine and Orson, separated by a freak of Nature, as is Cæsar from his cup bearer. Yet calcine the gem, rob Cæsar of the purple, and the extremes meet, the two are dust to "stop a beer-barrel." The diamond is merely carbon crystallised by a natural process that has defied the chemical art of all ages. Countless have been the attempts made, and cunning the results, except to the eye of the expert, yet, given the raw material, the alchemist has failed to produce the exact conditions whereby the transformation is

wrought. The most successful experiments were those achieved by Mr. J. B. Hannay, but the results cost double their marketable value.

Few romances are more interesting than those weaved around the famous diamonds of history. They have been the load-stars of conquest that have changed the dynasties of centuries; they have doomed kings to death or exile, and raised

the social pariah to wealth and dignity; they have been the proudest glory of the world's gluttoned tyrant, and anon have lain ignoble in the greasy pouch of the wandering thief. So they have journeyed through the cycles of nations, leaving a blood-red track behind; talismen of evil, whose possession, gained through a sacked empire or the assassin's knife meant a short-lived joy and a heritage of sorrow.

From the store of legendary wealth which these great gems afford, it is only possible to take a small



THE KOH-I-NUR  
(First and second cutting).

part. I have therefore selected those that are the heirlooms of modern crowns and whose histories particularly lend themselves to narration. Chief among these is, of course, the Koh-I-Nur, which is now one of the most prized ornaments of the British regalia. It has a fictitious history of some fifty centuries, wherein its baleful influence is strongly marked. But it will suffice to commence at a later date, the middle of the sixteenth century, when the great gem is said to have formed one of the eyes in the famous peacock throne of



the "Great Mogul." It remained in the possession of the Mogul dynasty until the sack of Delhi by Nadir Shah, when the Persian hordes swept over India like a withering blast. The "Koh-I-Nur" was one of the treasures which the Shah had promised himself as his share of the spoils: hence he was deeply chagrined to find no trace of it among the fabulous wealth of plunder. It was not till some time had elapsed that he learnt from a woman of the royal harem that the stone was hidden in the turban of the deposed Emperor Mohammed. This gave an opening for Eastern subtlety, which Nadir was not slow to seize on. There is an old oriental ceremony in which monarchs, as a mark of amity and reconciliation, exchange turbans at great functions. He proclaimed his purpose of placing his royal captive once more upon the throne of Delhi, and ordered a reception, worthy of the occasion, to be held. Then, with many professions of brotherly regard, he took the priceless head-gear from his own brow and presented it to his dumbfounded rival. The discomfiture of the Emperor was complete: he had no choice but to return the civility. Still, though severely taxed, his inherent dignity carried him through the ordeal. With such composure did he hand his own turban to the conqueror that the latter felt a terrible dread lest the story should have been fictitious. He brought the proceedings to a premature close, and retired with his new acquisition to the privacy of his tent. Here his fears were dispelled by the discovery, in its linen hiding-place, of his heart's desire, to which, in his transport of joy, he gave its present title: "Mountain of Light."

The evil destiny which seems to have accompanied the possession of the "Koh-I-Nur," soon overtook Nadir Shah on his return to Persia with plunder valued at sixty millions. Eight years after his triumphal entry into Persia, he fell a victim to the ambition of his more powerful chiefs, who assassinated him and deposed his feeble son and successor, Shah Rokh, dividing the kingdom between them. The unhappy young monarch seems to have inherited the paternal passion for these baubles, for he elected even to lose his sight rather than relinquish them with the rest of his possessions. His oppressor, Aga Mohammed, followed him to Meshed, at which city he had been allowed to remain as governor. In the disguise of a pilgrim

he succeeded in investing the town with his followers and in seizing the person of his blind victim. But although indescribable tortures wrung from the latter all his treasures, they were powerless to make him yield up the great diamond. His sufferings proved fatal to him, but, ere he died, he was restored to his rights by Ahmed Shah, the founder of the Afghan Empire, the price of his help being the "Koh-I-Nur."

Thus it was transferred, with all its baneful influence, to the Durani dynasty. We may pass over the more or less tragic histories of this line, until we come to Shah Zamán, who fell a victim to the ambitions of his brother, Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk. He had his eyes pierced out with a lancet and was confined for years in a stronghold, the gem being concealed by him in the wall, plastered over. Thus it ceased to delight the eyes of men, until one of its sharp angles, having worked its way through the cement, scratched the hand of an official, and it once more became the chief ornament of the oppressor. But Nemesis was not long in treading on the heels of Shuja, for he suffered the same fate as his victim, including the loss of sight. Like him, also, he could not be induced to yield up the fatal diamond, but took it with him when he sought the protection of Runjit Singh, "the Lion of the Punjaub." The hospitality with which he was received proved delusive, for Runjit had the same keen appreciation for precious stones, and as little ruth in his methods of acquiring them. He began his operations by oppressing the consort of his unhappy guest, and, by the amiable means of starvation, obtained the bulk of their remaining regalia.

But the Koh-I-Nur was not amongst them. He resumed his tactics, without success, until Wuffo-Begum was induced to promise to yield up the stone at the price of her husband's release and a life-pension. She, however, saw fit to break this pledge, on the grounds that she had sold it, and was further deprived of food. It was Shuja himself who finally determined to part with the stone. A solemn interview took place between the two monarchs, the diamond being placed in a packet at an equal distance between them. An hour was spent in oriental contemplation, until the patience of the conqueror was utterly exhausted. He ordered the wrapper to be removed, and, when the full magnificence of the stone flashed upon

his delighted gaze, he rapturously enquired, "At what price do you value it?" "At good luck," replied Shuja, "for it has ever been the associate of him who has vanquished his foe."

It remained with Runjit until his death, in 1839, and was found in the Lahore treasury when the Crown property was taken over by the East India Company, to defray the government debts, partly in connection with the Indian Mutiny. It was then presented, in 1850, to our own Queen, who now, as the Kaiser-I-Hind, seems the rightful possessor of a gem which has always been the insignia of Eastern conquest.

Considerable obscurity and contradiction enshroud the history of the great Russian diamond, the "Orloff," which now glitters in the Imperial sceptre. The most reliable version, accepted by Mr. Streeter, is that given by Dutens. According to him, its first appearance was as one of the eyes of the statue of Scheringham, in the Temple of Brama. A deserter from the French army fled to the island and was employed in the vicinity of the temple. His cupidity was aroused by the accounts he heard of the fabulous gems which adorned the idol, and he forthwith devoted himself to the acquirement of at least a portion of them. Disguised as a native devotee, his marked veneration admitted him freely into the sacred precincts, wherein no Christian ever set foot. His opportunity came when night and the elements conspired to shield the sacrilege. He succeeded in loosening one of the priceless orbs, and escaping to Madras, where, for the paltry sum of £2,000, he disposed of it to an English sea-captain. The story after this is somewhat mixed, but it is certain that it was for sale in Amsterdam, when handsome Count Orloff purchased it to appease the displeasure of his fickle sovereign, Catherine II.

The pedigree of the Orloffs is a romantic one. The founder, Ivan Orel, or Eagle, was a private in the famous body called the *Strelitzes*, or archers, who were to Russia what the Janissaries are to the Turkish Empire. They were rigorously suppressed by Peter the Great, who decapitated many of them

himself on a long beam of wood. Orel was amongst these, and, when his turn came to place himself in readiness for execution, he calmly kicked away a head which obstructed his place on the beam, remarking, "If this is my place it ought to be clear." His *sang froid* won the rugged heart of the Czar, who had him appointed to a regiment of the line, where his prowess won for him the rank of officer and a patent of nobility. All his descendants more or less distinguished themselves in arms, the most eminent, perhaps, being Count Gregory, who gave his name to the diamond we are considering. His personal beauty drew upon him the attention of the Grand Duchess, Catherine, then the wife of the heir to the throne, and when she rose to supreme power, his fortunes ascended with hers. Indeed, but for the opposi-

tion of the Czarina's advisers, it is not unlikely that he would have become her consort on the throne. He does not seem to have worn his honours with the modesty of the truly great, for his arrogance, assisted by the rising of another star in the firmament of royal favour, served to check his ambitious course. An imperial command con-



THE ORLOFF.

signed him to his seat at Gatchina, whence he was sent to the palace of Tsar-Skoe Selo. Here, with the title of Prince, he dwelt for some time in regal magnificence. It was during his travels, whilst still under this cloud, that he made his costly purchase as a peace-offering to his royal mistress, the price paid being 1,400,000 florins, Dutch money. His remaining history is soon told: he married and travelled abroad, but returned to St. Petersburg on the death of his wife. He was presented by the Empress with the Marble Palace, where he resided till his death, in 1783, having for some time previously lost the use of his senses. The Orloff diamond is valued at £369,800, and weighs 183 carats. It is immediately beneath the golden eagle of the royal sceptre.

Perhaps the most interesting of any is the history of the "Pitt" or "Regent" diamond, which has been for nearly two centuries among the Crown jewels of France, and is priced at £480,000.

If we can accept its legendary origin, it was discovered, in the year 1701, by a slave who was working in the Parteil Mines, on the Kistna. He secured the gem by the novel process of hiding it in a hole which he himself cut in the calf of his leg. Making his way to the coast, he entrusted his secret to the captain of an English ship. In his anxiety to escape the penalty of his action, he promised the stone to the skipper in return for a safe conveyance to a free country. A gross piece of treachery concluded this relationship, for the skipper, having got the slave into his power, secured the diamond and pitched the owner into the sea. He afterwards disposed of it for £1,000 to Jam Chund, the great diamond merchant of the East, and he, in turn, sold it for £20,400 to Governor Thomas Pitt, of Fort St. George, grandfather of our great statesman, the Earl of Chatham.

On its arrival it was skilfully cut and reduced from 410 to  $136\frac{3}{4}$  carats, the process costing £5,000, and occupying two years. It then passed into the royal house of France, being purchased, in 1717, for £135,000, by the Duke of Orleans, Regent during the minority of Louis XV. It remained the chief ornament of the French regalia until the pomps and vanities of the effete Court were mowed down by the ruthless scythe of Demos. On the night of September 16th, 1792, when the gaping populace lay sated with the blood of their oppressors, the whole of this vast treasury disappeared. The robbers had scaled the colonnade, from the side of the Place Louis XV., and had entered through a window the Garde Meuble. Having obtained possession of their booty, they departed without leaving the faintest clue behind them. The matter remained a mystery until an anonymous letter was received by the Commune, directing that a search should be made in a ditch near the Champs Elysées. In this spot part of the treasure was discovered, amongst it being the great diamond.

The object of the theft did not transpire for some twelve years, although the motive was assigned to many strange and startling causes, ranging from matters of political urgency down to

sordid criminality. But in 1804 a well-known trial for forgery threw some light upon it, one of the prisoners, named Baba, making a complete confession, not only of the case before the Court, but of the more remarkable robbery of the royal treasure. These are his exact words: "It is not the first time that my revelations have been useful to Society, and if I am now condemned I will implore the Emperor's pardon. But for me, Napoleon would never have mounted the throne; to me alone is due the success of the Marengo Campaign. I was one of the robbers of the Garde Meuble. I had assisted my associates to bury, in the Allée de Veuves, the 'Regent' and the other easily-recognised objects,

by which they might have been betrayed. On the promise of a free pardon—a promise which was faithfully kept—I disclosed the hiding-place. Here the 'Regent' was discovered, and you are aware, gentlemen, that this magnificent diamond was pledged by the first Consul to the Dutch Government, in order to raise the money of which he stood in the greatest need after the 18th Brumaire." With regard

to the pledging of the diamond, Kluge maintains that it was not by the Dutch Government, but by Trescow, a Berlin merchant, that the advance was made.

Many reports help to confuse the story of its career after being once more redeemed. Bonaparte certainly wore it in the pommel of his sword, and it was seen, with the rest of the Crown jewellery, at the Paris Exhibition of 1855. Another unlikely story states that, after the battle of Waterloo, it was seized in the Emperor's state carriage by the Prussians, and carried to Berlin. It is, however, sufficient that it has since been, according to Gruber, "the first diamond in the French treasury," and is the chief ornament of the disused crown of France, which, by a curious anomaly, is, without doubt, the most priceless coronet extant.

The great diamond of the House of Austria, called the "Florentine," has the same mystical origin as its compeers, but, as it is a romantic one, we will give it for what it is worth. Its first ap-



REGENT OR PITT.

pearance in history was in the battle of Morat, in 1476, when Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, following the custom of the time, brought all his valuables with him to the scene of carnage. In the rout that followed the gem disappeared with the rest of the royal baggage. It was found by



FLORENTINE.

a Swiss soldier, who, taking it for a piece of glass, sold it to a priest for a florin, the clerical bartering it again to the Bernese authority for the princely sum of three francs. Passing through several hands it was purchased by that master mind of mediæval duplicity, Ludovico Sforza. It then passed into the possession of the great Medici family, and when the Grand Duchy of Tuscany was exchanged against the Duchy of Lorraine, Francis Stephen, Lord of the latter, became the owner of the famous stone. His marriage with the Empress, Maria Theresa, was the means of introducing the "Florentine" into its present exalted position in the crown of the Imperial House of Austria. It weighs 139½ carats, and has been variously estimated at from £40,000 to £50,000, and by some authorities at £55,000.

The "Florentine" has been often confused with another remarkable diamond, the great "Sancy," whose early history is wrapped in even greater mystery than those we have treated of. But there seems little doubt that Mons. de Sanci, French Ambassador at Constantinople, brought it from the East, towards the end of the sixteenth century. He advanced it to his royal master, Henri III. of France, for the purpose of raising Swiss mercenaries to crush the rising power of the Duc de Guise. The corrupt monarch preferred

to wear it in the toque which he habitually wore to conceal his total baldness, a condition achieved at the age of twenty-six years, and a fitting accompaniment to the rouge on his cheeks and the cosmetics on lips, eyes, and ears. Thus he sat amongst his lap-dogs, monkeys, dwarfs, and followers, heedless of the unutterable Pandemonium which shrieked around him. His successor, Henri IV. of Navarre, borrowed the diamond from his minister, Nicholas Harlai, for the similar purpose of raising Swiss troops. The messenger who was entrusted with the transaction was assassinated in the forest, and, to the world generally, the gem seemed lost. But Harlai, apparently knowing the resources of his servant, had the body opened and found his suspicions were correct, that his trusty messenger had preferred swallowing the diamond to relinquishing it. With the appointment of Harlai as ambassador to the English Court, the "Sancy" was purchased by our Queen Bess. It is mentioned in an inventory of the jewels in the Tower of London, made in 1605, as forming part of "The Mirror of Great Britain." The extract runs thus: "A greate and riche jewell of golde, called the 'Myrror of Greate Brytayne,' conteyninge one verie fayre table dyamonde, one verie fayre table rubye, twoe other largge dyamondes, cut lozengewyse, the one of them called the 'Stone of the letter H of Scotlande,' garnysed with small dynamondes, twoe rounde perles fixed,



SANCY.

and one fayre diamonde cutt in fawcettes, bought of Sauncey."

It remained in the English Royal Family till after the Restoration, when it was presented by the Queen Dowager, Henrietta Maria, with a ruby necklace, and 160 pearls set and strung together

with gold, to Somerset, Earl of Worcester, as a mark of queenly gratitude for his services to the Stuart line. It came again into the possession of the Crown in the next reign, and was sold by James to the Grande Monarque for £25,000. It was worn by his successor on the day of his coronation, and was among the French Crown jewels, which were, as we have seen above, stolen from the Garde-Meuble, in 1792. Its future movements are uncertain, until some forty-five years later, when we find it purchased by Prince Demidoff, and while in his hands it formed the subject of

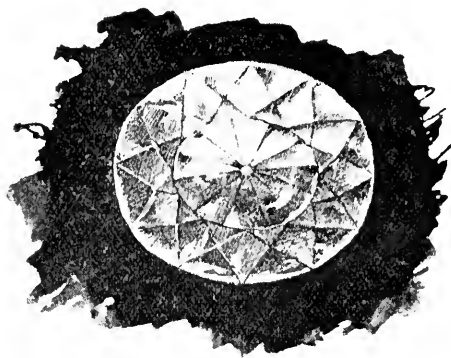
and politician earned him the surname of Taurischesky. His grand-niece and heiress, the Princess Colorado, sold it to Napoleon III. at the time of his wedding, and it was re-christened by his fair consort after herself. It flashed in her necklace throughout the superb glamour of the Second Empire. When the imperial house of cards collapsed before the Teuton blast, the gem was disposed of for £15,000 to the Gaikwar of Baroda, who, after his trial for attempting to poison the British Resident, was deposed. With his exit, the "Eugenie" also disappeared, and has not



EUGENIE.

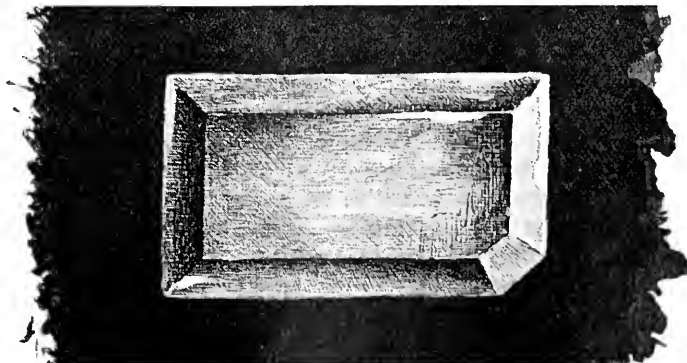
a famous law-suit. After travelling backwards and forwards, from east to west, it became the possession of the Maharajah of Puttiala, who wore it on the occasion of the Grand Durbar, held in honour of the visit of the Prince of Wales.

Space permits only a reference to the two remaining brilliants in our list, the "Eugenie" and the "Cumberland." The former introduces us again to the Slavonic Semiramis. Catherine II. wore it in a hair pin until she bestowed it, with other munificent marks of royal favour, upon Potemkin, whose undoubted abilities as a soldier



CUMBERLAND.

since been heard of. The second diamond owes its name to its connection with the Duke of Cumberland, the Butcher of Culloden, who, after stamping out the glimmering hopes of Bonny Prince Charlie, became the idol of the English people. The stone represented the spasmodic gratitude of the loyal City of London, whom it cost £10,000. How soon he fell from his high estate is familiar history. The future career of the diamond is lost in the muddle of domestic infelicity which distinguished the life of the Duke, but it is believed to have been restored to Hanover by our present sovereign, in 1866.



GREAT TABLE DIAMOND

# A CHANGELING BRIDE.

BY ETHEL J. HEDDLE.

## CHAPTER I.

"You must ask them the way to the Nymphs, the daughters of the Evening Star, who dance about the golden tree, in the Atlantic island of the West."—*Kingsley's "Heroes."*

"LET me carry them home for you, Tibbie." The answer to Donald's kindly offer was a sound evidently expressive of refusal and scorn; and the old woman let her heavy bundle of sticks slip off her bent shoulders, looking up at him with contemptuous and defiant eyes under her shaggy eyebrows.

"I can carry my own bundles ferry well, Donald M'Tavish!"

He smiled lazily, going back to his attitude of waiting, his fine, broad shoulders being propped against a boulder which jutted out from the hillside. There was a little pause. Donald let his eyes travel over the sea, sparkling below in the light of sunset. There had been a crimson glory behind the Quiraing, and the peaks stood out purple now against a faint pink haze. Tibbie regarded him scornfully, utterly unmoved by his proffer of help. And yet, as young men went, she had rather a liking for Donald M'Tavish; at all events, she would stop and talk to him occasionally, which was more than she would do to almost any other man in Skye.

If Tibbie had lived a few years previous to this, she would have been burned as a witch; that was as certain as it was that even now she was well known as "no canny," and respectfully avoided.

Woe betide the miscreant that incurred Tibbie's ill-will! The people of the village had sufficient stories anent her evil powers to supply them with tales around the peat fire all winter. When she walked past their houses, they gave her as wide a birth as if she had been the Evil One himself,—catching their little ones to their side as Tibbie "hirpled" past, looking neither to the left nor the right. When reproved for superstition and folly by the minister—to whom, at his first coming, they had ventured to repeat one or two of Tibbie's "on-goings,"—they had only shaken their heads darkly, declaring afterwards that "puir man! he little kent;" and, as affairs turned out, had he not been bitterly punished for his contempt? Had not Tibbie heard, and vowed revenge? Had not

she buried a cat as a symbol of the minister's death, and had not he thereon fallen ill, only recovering when the cat was found and disinterred? And then, had not Tibbie, not to be over-reached, moulded the cleric's image in wax before her fire, and melted it to the sound of horrible incantations? and had not Mr. M'Leod been shortly "ca'ad hence?"—that is to say, over to a new charge, where, let us hope, he repented of his daring! He could not, of course, as everyone said, bide in Skye at all, with Tibbie his avowed enemy! And even then she did not leave him alone, for M'Neil, the blacksmith, himself saw her bury a wooden image stuck through with pins; and did not news shortly after reach Skye that the minister had died of pleurisy in Spring?

Yes, Tibbie was a witch, without doubt; and she was feared accordingly.

But Donald M'Tavish, who only laughed when they told him that she had been seized by the fairies, and for seven years had dwelt under ground, learning magic and evil arts, had rather a fancy for the odd, ill-tempered, irritable old creature, and once or twice he had even ventured to do her one or two little kindnesses, though certainly these had never been received with either gratitude or civility. When she scowled at him, he only walked off stolidly, smiling, and next time he was just as ready to help her.

Tibbie perceived now that he had almost forgotten her existence. She rebuked this rudeness by suddenly laying one claw-like hand on his arm, with a grip that made him start.

"What are you waiting for, Donald M'Tavish?"

"To talk to you, Tibbie," he said mischievously, rubbing his arm ruefully as he spoke. "The people in the village will tell me that you can do anything you like—just anything! Won't you tell me, then, how to make a fortune?"

For answer she gave a half-snarling laugh—"So that you can marry Eilean MacVriar! Ohone! what a fool you are, Donald—what a fool!"

"Why am I a fool, Tibbie? She is the bonniest lass in all Skye!"

"Yes, oh yes, she is ferry beautiful—beautiful enough—but she is not for you, Donald!"

"Why not?"

Now that he condescended to be in earnest, Tibbie's look altered a little, and though she scowled still, her tone was not unamiable. "She is not a lass for you,—not for any Skye lad at all! She is a changeling!"

"I've heard that story before," Donald said. "It is all nonsense, Tibbie! Oh yes, I remember you told me yourself! How a beautiful lady dressed all in green, appeared one night at Nellie MacVriar's house with a little baby in her arms, and how Duncan and Nellie took her in, and let her warm her white hands by the fire, and how she drew the life blood all out of Nellie's own baby, by just sitting there, and when the morning came the baby—their baby—was dead, and the little goblin-child was left in its place! And Eilean is the child—oh yes, I remember. It is all nonsense, Tibbie!"

"Is it?" she cried angrily. "Oh, is it indeed? Well I will punish you for that, Donald M'Tavish, and I will punish her too! She has no more heart than the sea yonder, and no more love for you; and there is Molly Macleod, the sweetest and the best lass in the village, that will love you till the day of her death, and you will not look at her, nor speak to her at all! Well, take your choice—here is Eilean—and I will punish you for that."

As she muttered the last words, half incoherently, but with a working of her dry lips and a tremulous motion of her head which betokened violent passion, a girl's figure came swiftly up the hill-path, and Donald, heedless of Tibbie's threat, advanced with an eager sentence of welcome.

The girl was beautiful enough to rouse admiration in a mind far less susceptible than was Donald's. She wore a short green skirt, faded to a hue unrivalled by Liberty himself—a loose white bodice, and over her tangle of curls, under which eyes, blue as violets, peeped out laughingly, was a heavy creel, overflowing with such a pile of green grass, pink clover, white hemlocks and golden-eyed daisies, that it looked only a huge and picturesque bouquet, with a sickle thrust in the centre of it.

She stood a moment thus, "a sight to make an old man young," her eyes dancing, her teeth flashing, her dimples bewitching to the eyes of man, and then, slipping off the creel, stood still, laughing into Donald's face tormentingly.

"How long have you been waiting for me?"

"I did not mind that," Donald said, looking at her as if she bounded his vision; and then she turned and saw Tibbie's bent figure, and reviewed it contemptuously.

"Been killing any more cats, Tibbie?"

"No," the old woman replied, her tone changing to one of great and whining sweetness, though her eyes glittered. "There is no one who deserves that I should hate them—oh, none at all! But what is a bonnie lass like you doing here, when the fairies are dancing to-night in the Cave? This is mid-summer night, you know that! Go down and see them, Eilean; Donald will row you there! This is the night—and they will let you dance around the golden tree too—oh yes, they will let you dance with the best of them!"

Eilean laughed mockingly. "Yes, I will go, Tibbie, if Donald will row me to the Fairies' Cave—will you Donald? And I will say that the Queen of the Witches sent me!"

She laughed again, a light, cold laugh, that somehow struck oddly and unpleasantly on Donald's ear, and Tibbie's eyes glittered,—she stood rubbing her dry hands one over the other, fixing the girl with her steely eyes, and then Eilean, leaving the flowers and pansies discarded, put her hand under Donald's arm, and with another tantalising laugh, raced him down the hill.

"Come along, Donald—lest we are late—and if we do not go, Tibbie will cast the evil-eye on us ferry soon!"

Her words came up to Tibbie, where the old woman stood with one foot viciously planted on the sweet faces of the flowers—and her drawn and furrowed features worked with malignant glee. "Yes—go—lest you are late! But you will not be late. Oh no, you will not be late! And take a good night's dancing, Eilean MacVriar, a ferry good night's dancing! They will be ferry glad to have you there again!"

She watched, tramping down the flowers, till she saw Donald launch a little boat from the shining sands below, and then she covered her gleaming eyes with one hand, in order to see better, till the little brown boat and its two inmates had melted into the golden light on the sea.

Then, and it was now almost dusk on the hill-side, she lifted her bundle of sticks and tramped over the heather towards her lonely home.



## CHAPTER II.

## THE FAIRIES' CAVE.

"Oh, then I see Queen Mab hath been with you."  
—*Romeo and Juliet*.

"Do you really believe you will see the fairies dancing, Eilean?"

"And why not, Donald?"

He forgot to answer—he was watching her trail her little brown hand through the water at the side of the boat; and then she looked up with her bright cold smile: "I am half a fairy, you know, they say! 'A changeling!'"

"Oh yes!" Donald agreed, "you are a fairy! That is ferry true, Eilean!"

"I believe it is," she said, a curious sparkle of light in her blue eyes, "and that is why I am so fond of green—and of mischief! I am ferry fond of mischief, all fairy folk are!—I met Molly Macleod this afternoon, and she asked me, 'Where are you going, Eilean?' 'To meet Donald, Molly!' I said—and you should have seen her white face, Donald! How I laughed! She is a silly lass, Molly—Och, what is any man worth that a girl should look like that for him! There are plenty lads in Skye forbye you, Donald!"

She spoke with perfect seriousness—she meant all that she said—Molly's whitening face had amused her greatly; but Donald was too much in love to perceive any heartlessness in the speech. Had less perfect lips spoken, he might have noticed—but a man's lady-love, like the king, can verily do no wrong! But something in the words hurt him: he looked at her with a kind of piteous pleading in his handsome brown eyes.

"And in all Skye to me there is only one lass! —Oh, Eilean!"

"Oh, Donald!" she repeated mockingly. "And so you are blind, are you? Then go beyond Skye, and find a Sassenach lass!"

"What does that mean, Eilean?"

"Nothing!—only that I wish you would hurry up and get rich—that is all! I shall not marry you till you are rich, Donald!"

"So you say, Eilean," he said gloomily. "I am trying very hard!"

"Oh, yes; but you should go away! There are no fortunes here in Skye! And after I was married, I could not live in Skye, Donald—such a little, quiet island! I must have enjoyment; I must be dressed like Lady Macdonald at the ball,

with all that pretty, soft, shining, white silk of her train lying on the ground beside her, and her arms shining through lace! Oh, how beautiful she was! and then, do you remember the stones in her hair, Donald, like white fire,—and around her neck? And if I were dressed like that—yes, I could be ferry beautiful too!"

"You are beautiful as you are, dear lass!"

"Och, no!" and Eilean tossed her golden head disdainfully. "Come, Donald, row close into the shore, and if the fairies are there dancing, in that case then I will go and dance too, and you—you must sail away and earn a fortune, and then come back for me."

She was wont to mock and laugh and tease him thus—though they had been betrothed—clasping hands, as they stood, one on either side of the burn, by moonlight, swearing constancy: but Donald did not answer her now; he half sighed as he rowed close to a certain spot where the rock face was riven and showed light within. He and Eilean had been here once or twice before, never on midsummer night. It was on midsummer night, as all Skye knew, that magic routs were sometimes visible to mortal eye. Not that any thought of the fairy lore entered Donald's mind, as he guided the boat through the narrow and low archway of rock: he was only thinking slowly and painfully of the gist of Eilean's words.

But as the boat swept into the centre of the cave, she uttered a low exclamation of rapturous delight, and he looked up to see that she was gazing before her, her hands clasped in her lap, and her lovely eyes gleaming with the eager excitement of a child.

The scene was beautiful enough, indeed, to draw delighted admiration from anyone, though Eilean had seen it before without remark. The circular sides of the rocky basin opened into several long deep caves, beneath whose shadow the water looked weird and dark—of a deep emerald tint that, in some places, was almost black; underneath their boat it lay clear and transparent, of the loveliest aquamarine hue, through which they could see the boat's shadow reflected on the yellow sand far below. Miniature jelly fish, edged with lilac spots and long white fringe, floated beside them, with trailing sprays of delicate pink sea-weed, more beautiful by contrast with the clear, green water, and above was the



pale pearl of the sunset sky, and rocks, crowned with heather and ferns and tall grasses, "blown to sudden silver" by the soft zephyrs which seemed to caress them, as a mother's hand caresses the shining locks of a child's hair.

No breath of air reached the cave. The tall foxgloves, pink and white, which stood sentinel-like in every cranny of the rock, did not stir a leaf: the silence was intense. As Donald gazed, he was startled again by another exclamation, more rapt than before, from Eilean. She was leaning forward, her lips wreathed in smiles, her eyes sparkling. "Oh, yes, I will come," she said, and then she laughed and clapped her hands as if in ecstasy.

"Eilean!" Donald cried, "Eilean!"

The girl started as if roused, and turned her head sharply and almost pettishly. "Why, Donald," she said, "do you not see them? Yes, we will go and dance. Will we not?"

"I see nothing," he said, bewildered, for she had turned away again. "What are you looking at, Eilean?"

She pointed her hand towards one of the caves. "There, don't you see them, Donald? How beautiful they are! Oh, only look at that fairy in white, with the beautiful pink seaweed in her hair; only see how she is teasing that little goblin!" and then she burst into a peal of mischievous laughter which made Donald gaze at her in terror. He saw nothing of what she described: there were no fairies, no goblins. And then she interrupted his almost terrified thoughts with another question. "Do you see the great golden tree, Donald? and the stones—are they precious stones? Oh, it is all ferry lovely. I shall dance, too. See! they are beckoning to me; and listen, oh, only listen to the music!"

She drew her breath as if in rapture, her face flushed softly, her eyes shone, and then turning, she said, impatiently, "Row me in, Donald. Quick! quick! how slow you are."

He felt as a man in a dream, but he obeyed her instinctively. What mirage, what delusion mocked her? Once in the shadow of the cavity, she would see there was nothing. Then, when he had taken the boat into the centre of the cave, he looked up. "Eilean, do you see there is nothing?—have you—"

A breath, as if it was the rustle of a skirt,

seemed to pass him by; a light laugh fell upon his ear: he was staring before him wildly into space and darkness—he was alone in the boat—she was gone!

"Eilean!" he cried, and stretched out his hands. "Eilean, where are you? Come back!"

There was no answer, and then, as he sat bewildered and amazed, it seemed as if the whole air were suddenly full of the softest laughter, the swish of drapery or of wings, the lap of dancing feet, and then another burst of the same melodious and mocking mirth. He looked round, he rowed on every side, to see nothing but the rocky wall, to hear nothing more. Presently it would have all seemed a dream, but that she was gone! Great drops broke out on his forehead; his hands felt cold as ice; the silence seemed to chill him with dismay, and then he remembered Tibbie's words, her oddly gleaming and malicious eyes! She had sent them there, and Eilean was lost to him. He called her name again and again, piteously, distractedly. If she had loved him, changeling as she was, she must have heard; but there was no reply of any kind, and though he sat thus till late, bewildered and dismayed, nothing answered him.

Dusk fell; he could no longer see the sky above, and a little wind swept down even into the cavern. He turned away at last, heavily and sorrowfully, and rowed back into the first opening, then out into the deep. And then he saw that a heavy ground swell had set in, and the waves were marshalling their white horses out at sea—even against his boat they dashed as if in anger, and, keeping close by the shore, Donald turned and rowed at length homewards.

Without Eilean!

And though he returned, not once, but many times to the Fairies' Cave to seek her, to call her to return, Eilean came no more to Skye, nor to the man who loved her!

And thus seven years passed.

### CHAPTER III.

#### MIDSUMMER NIGHT.

"Come unto those yellow sands,"—*The Tempest*.

It was the twenty-fourth of June once more, and once more Tibbie was climbing the path leading to her little thatched abode, which nestled

behind the shelter of a big boulder on the hill-side.

Not one whit changed seemed Tibbie. There were so many wrinkles already on her brown face, that time could not, if it would, have found room to lay another, and her eyes were as bright as ever, the years had not dimmed them at all. It had grown to be a belief in the village that Tibbie would go on living for ever: that every new generation would find her on the hill-side, crouching in her odd, ghost-like attitude, on the "loupin'-on stane," which some odd freak had made her plant before the crazy door. She had found the secret which the ages had denied the alchemist of yore, there was no doubt of that.

When she reached the heather-clad boulder by which she had talked to Donald seven years before, Tibbie stopped short, and it did not seem to surprise her at all, to find him standing there now, in much the same attitude.

He was changed, if she was not: the tweed suit he wore had known better scissors than those of the village tailor; he carried himself, too, with the assured look of one who has won a place for himself in the world and means to hold it.

"Well Tibbie!"

"It is you," she said, "And you have come back to Skye, have you? Well, have you made your fortune, Donald M'Tavish?"

The old mocking was in her tone still, but he seemed as impervious to it as of old, "I have made a good deal of money, Tibbie."

"Yes, I heard that. Are you married?"

He shook his head, and she went on in her shrill tones, "I heard that you were speaking to Molly Macleod at the trysting-stone—are you going to tryst with Molly?—No, Molly did not tell me."

How had she heard, then? He was so startled for a moment, that he turned and regarded her sharply—the truth being that he had come on Molly by mere chance after dark the night before, and they had only talked a few moments and then parted.

No one had met him on the road either going or coming; no one had passed. As Tibbie spoke, a fleeting vision of Molly's sweet pale face rose up before him—she *had* a very sweet face, and her kindly Highland voice had been a little low and trembling when she greeted him; and then she had taken her arms off the stone and said, "Well, good

night to you, Donald," very calmly, and walked away.

He remembered these things indistinctly, then gathering his thoughts, said, "No, Tibbie, I am not trysting with Molly."

She gave a sound expressive of deep contempt, and would have moved off, but Donald began to speak, laying a hand detainingly on her arm.

"Don't go, Tibbie—I want you to help me. Do you remember what night this is?"

"Yes, I remember ferry well—what of that?"

"It is midsummer night," Donald said, "and just seven years ago you sent Eilean and me to the Fairies' Cavern, and there I lost her. I love her as much to-day as I loved her then, and I will never be content till I see her again—and I will never be happy!"

"And you are just a fool!" Tibbie said; "just a fool, and that is all about it."

"Perhaps; but if I am, then I shall never be anything else. Well, I had almost given up hope of seeing Eilean again, when they told me that she had never come back since that night; and then one day I came across an old book which spoke of all the legends and the traditions of Skye, and there I saw what I had forgotten."

"What was that?"

"That if the fairies or the witches make away with a mortal, even if she join their rout for seven years, she can still be saved and brought back, if some one who loves her very much will go on Midsummer's Night or New Year's Eve, armed with a cross of the rowan tree or with a dagger of cold steel, and call to her. Then she can see, and come away if she chooses, and if he has a very strong will to influence her. I have a very strong will." He concluded, and Tibbie stuck her stick into the ground furiously.

"And you will do that, Donald M'Tavish?"

"Yes," he said. "Is it true, Tibbie?"

She laughed maliciously. "Who is asking my help now, eh? And so you would do this, would you, Donald M'Tavish, to get Eilean for your bride? I tell you she is a changeling. Even if you win her back, she will always be hankering after her people. She has no more soul, I tell you, than the sea, and no more love! If you wed her, you will find you might as well have wed a stock or a stone, for all she will care for you!—And there is Molly——"

But Donald interrupted her with an exclamation of impatience. "Tibbie, do you think talking ever yet made a man in love change his mind? I will never think of Molly—never! Now, help me to get Eilean—help me, and you shall have anything that money can buy!"

"Yes, I will help you!" she said, after a moment's angry pause. "Since you are such a fool, you shall have her! Go to the cave, and wait there till twelve o'clock. Have you a dagger of cold steel?"

"Yes."

"Hold it in your hand and stand up in the boat—then you will see them dancing. It will be all you can do to keep from joining them: if you do, then ferry well—you are lost! But if you do not, then call Eilean twice, and tell her you are rich, and she shall have all she wishes. If she come to you, hold on to her like grim death, and row away! Do you understand it all? And then she can chill your heart for you: I do not care! I have done!"

She had marched off then, and Donald, forgetting even to thank her, strode hastily down the hill to the shining sands. He only knew that in a few hours, were he but strong—and was there any doubt of that?—he would clasp Eilean in his arms!

\* \* \* \* \*

Alone in the summer silence, with the boat motionless beneath him, and the yellow sand shining through the lovely green water, he felt as if he had never moved from that spot, as if Time stood still in this cool green cavern! Why, there were the very same foxgloves, the very same seaweed; the same grasses bent and swayed on the rock's edge far above, changing from green to gold, from gold to silver; even the sky was the one he remembered—palest pearl, with a lovely roseate tinge behind its opalescent softness.

And all these years Eilean had danced here, and the book told him it would seem to her as one night! He was far too early, of course; but his love and his longing and impatience would not permit him to stay on shore; he had secured a boat, and set off at once.

In the village street he had passed Molly, and had looked at her with a vague feeling of irritation, unjust as he knew it to be. She had smiled at him kindly, and he had been conscious again of an undercurrent of admiration for her as she stood

with a flaxen-haired neighbour's child holding on to the skirt of her cotton gown. Something in the sweet, peaceful, patience of her look reminded him of a Madonna face he had seen in a church, but the next moment he had passed on and had forgotten her; for his whole heart was singing aloud, the air seemed full of Eilean's laughter, of her cold, sweet tones, and her face danced before him as if in the varying mirage of a dream.

He sat thus dreaming of her now, perfectly content to wait, and the light died a little in the sky, though it was not dark at all, and the white spikes of the foxgloves seemed like fairy candles in the rocks. He fell into a half dream as the time passed, and then awaking with the remembrance of something to do, he took out the dagger of cold steel from his breast-pocket and held it up to examine it. As he did so, a confused noise from the inner cave struck upon his ear, and he rowed hastily to the opening.

It was as if some one had suddenly given him hearing and eye-sight, as if he had been blind and deaf before! The cave was paved, beyond the opening, with a floor of mother-o'-pearl, the sides of the cavern gleamed with the same pearly white, and around a golden tree, which grew in the centre, its branches hung thickly with starry gems, were gathered groups of the loveliest beings his eyes had ever seen.

They were all gay, they were all young, they were all lovely,—his gaze wandered, entranced, from face to face, from blue eyes to brown, from golden tresses floating far past the waist and wreathed by forget-me-nots, to raven locks crowned by garlands of white roses, which the nymphs tossed as they bent and swayed to and fro to the unseen music that filled the air. The scene, real and close to him as it was, confused Donald like a phantasy; but as his brain grew clearer, he saw that all these nymphs had fairy lovers, who whispered in their ears, and, with arms interlaced, mingled in a mazy dance that seemed to have no end, no rule, and no law, and yet it was the very poetry of movement, the very embodiment of beauty. The music, and the constant sound of light silvery laughter, seemed suddenly to fill Donald with a passionate desire to join the revellers—to draw down bunches of these sparkling gems from the golden branches, for a solitary maiden, who, clothed all in white, seemed to dance alone, as if

she waited for him. Her soft seductive eyes drew him to her side, though she did not move toward, nor speak to him. Donald had just risen with an inarticulate murmur of delighted wonder, when his heart seemed suddenly to stand still, and he remembered!

For his eyes had fallen upon Eilean! There, before him, more beautiful than ever, in a skirt of shining green, with long sprays of the same magical colour of sea-weed mingling in her golden curls, she danced with the rest, her arms entwined with those of a fairy partner, her lovely eyes laughing into his.

Donald remembered everything as he looked upon her. He held up the dagger, and he called her name, "Eilean, Eilean!"

She alone seemed to hear; she paused, hesitated, a shadow crept over her face, and moving out of the circle of dancers, she looked, as a person in the blaze of sunlight looks into the darkness, toward Donald.

"Come to me, Eilean!" he cried, his deep voice tremulous with love and passion. "I am rich now—darling, dear heart! You shall have all you wish! Come, Eilean, Eilean!"

Slowly, as one in a dream, she moved away from the charmed circle, her fairy lover had clasped the lonely nymph as if nothing had happened. Slowly she neared Donald; in another moment he leant forward and touched her hand! She had stepped into the boat, and with a joyful and most passionate cry, he had clasped her to his breast!

She shivered all over; she clung to him. The light, the music, the laughter, the graceful bending figures—all disappeared. As he felt her head fall back, as if unconscious, on his shoulder, Donald laid her down in the boat, and rowed with all his might from the place. She was his once more!

They were out at sea when she roused herself, and sitting up, pushed her hair from her eyes and smoothed down her green skirt.

"Donald, I have had such a dream! I dreamt you left me in the cavern last night, and I danced there till this morning with the fairies!—Or is it true, and did you come and take me away!"

He leant down and took one of her hands—the lovely cold eyes looked into his.

"Yes, I came for you, Eilean! I loved you,

and I could not leave you! You had promised to be my wife, you know. And now I am rich. We shall not live in Skye, and you shall have all your heart can wish!"

She drew her little hand out of his, she sighed half impatiently, and Donald bent over her sunny head again. "Eilean, I love you so dearly—can't you love me a little, my dear lass?"

"I don't know what you mean, or what you want," she said. "Oh yes, I will marry you, and we will not live in Skye. But I wish—I wish I could have stayed! If I could have stayed, and you have brought me away, I would hate you! I can hate, though I cannot love, Donald!"

He shivered, and then because he did not know what to do, or how to answer her, he bent forward and kissed her again and again. And Eilean, cold as the sea beneath him, made no response to that mute, pleading love.

\* \* \* \* \*

Donald and Eilean left Skye, to return no more. In the heart of a great city the Highland maiden lived, the wife of its richest citizen. She had all that, as he had promised, her heart could desire. She was the admired of all beholders: none, whether duke's or king's daughter, could vie in beauty with Donald's changeling bride. Yet was there something intangible, witch-like in her beauty that repelled even while it charmed; for the heart beneath it was cold—cold as Alpine snow, lit with the radiance of sunrise. Ay, even toward the man who loved, and would love her till he died. He knew that, though she was his very own, they were wide as the poles asunder; that the ice that bound the lochs of his beautiful Skye was not colder, or more impervious to his love than she. And the shadow of a vague fear lay ever heavy at his heart—the dread that one day he would find her gone. She was only half-mortal: was her heart still restless and hungering for the fairy folk? Never did the dim foreboding pass away. Never again did they return to Skye, the isle that held the fatal spell.

And Molly—sweet, sad-eyed Molly, to whom all little children clung, whom all the village loved—remained unmarried till she died.

And still, they say, Tibbie may be seen, looking "frae her," in her old attitude on "the loupin'-on stane."

You may ask for her if you go to Skye.

## WONDERLAND.

BY PERCIVAL RIVERS.



BEFORE leaving the Yellowstone National Park, the traveller, as he approaches the Snake River, or Shoshone, to use the more euphonious Indian name, will find it hard, despite his previous toilsome pil-

grimage, to resist the temptation of following it to the magnificent Falls, which bear no mean resemblance to Niagara itself.

The course of the river lies for the most part across a vast lava plain, through which it has cut deep gorges, with almost vertical black walls. An observer, standing upon the edge of these walls, looks down into a broad circular excavation three quarters of a mile in diameter, and nearly seven hundred feet deep. The wall of the ravine opposite to him sinks, like the cliffs at his feet, in perpendicular bluffs nearly to the level of the river, while the broad excavation between the walls is covered by rough piles of black lava and rounded stones of trachyte rock.

The whole aspect of the scene is strange and savage indeed—a monotone of pale blue sky, olive and grey stretches of desert extending far away to the horizon, as level as the sea; a circular wall of jetty lava, the sharp edges of which are now and then battlemented in huge fortress-like masses: a smooth, broad river, the beryl green waters of which, here and there reflecting the intense solemnity of the cliffs, flow quietly into the middle of the scene, then plunge into a labyrinth of rocks, tumble over a precipice two hundred feet high, and then, after having been broken up into a dazzling sheet of foam, move westward in a still deep current, to disappear behind a black promontory. Such are the elements which, in their combination, leave upon the beholder an impression of weird and indescribable grandeur.

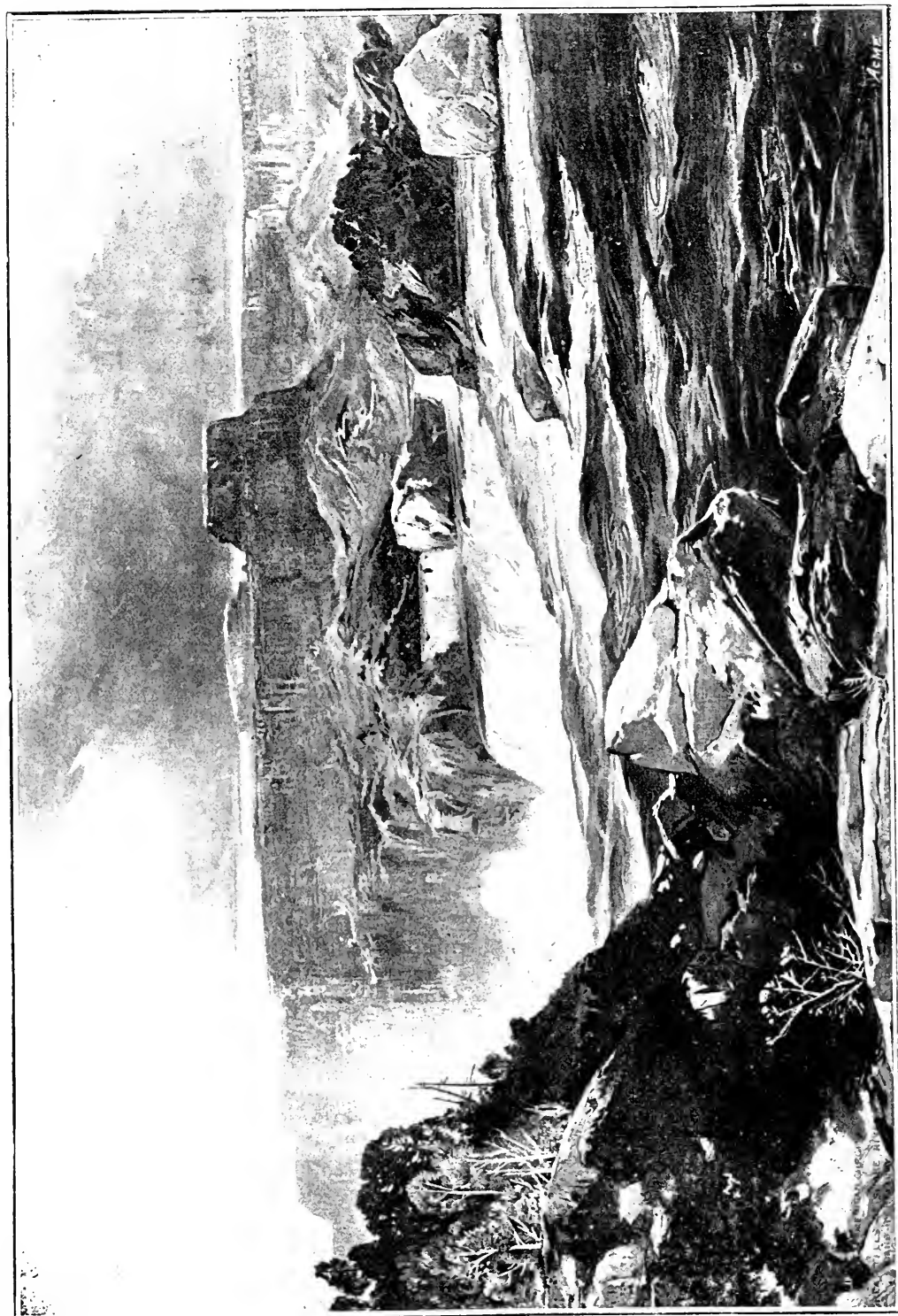
In the early morning light the shadows of the cliff are cast over half the basin, defining themselves in sharp outline here and there on the river. Upon the foam of the cataract one point of

the rock casts a cobalt-blue shadow. Where the river flows around the western promontory, it is wholly in shadow, and of a deep sea-green. A scanty growth of pine trees fringes the bank of the lower cliffs, overhanging the river. Utter barrenness characterises the scene: the mere suggestion of trees clinging here and there along the walls serves rather to heighten than relieve the forbidding gloom of the place. Nor does the flashing whiteness, where the river tears itself among the rocky islands, or rolls in spray down the cliff, brighten the aspect: for in contrast with its brilliancy the rocks seem darker and more wild.

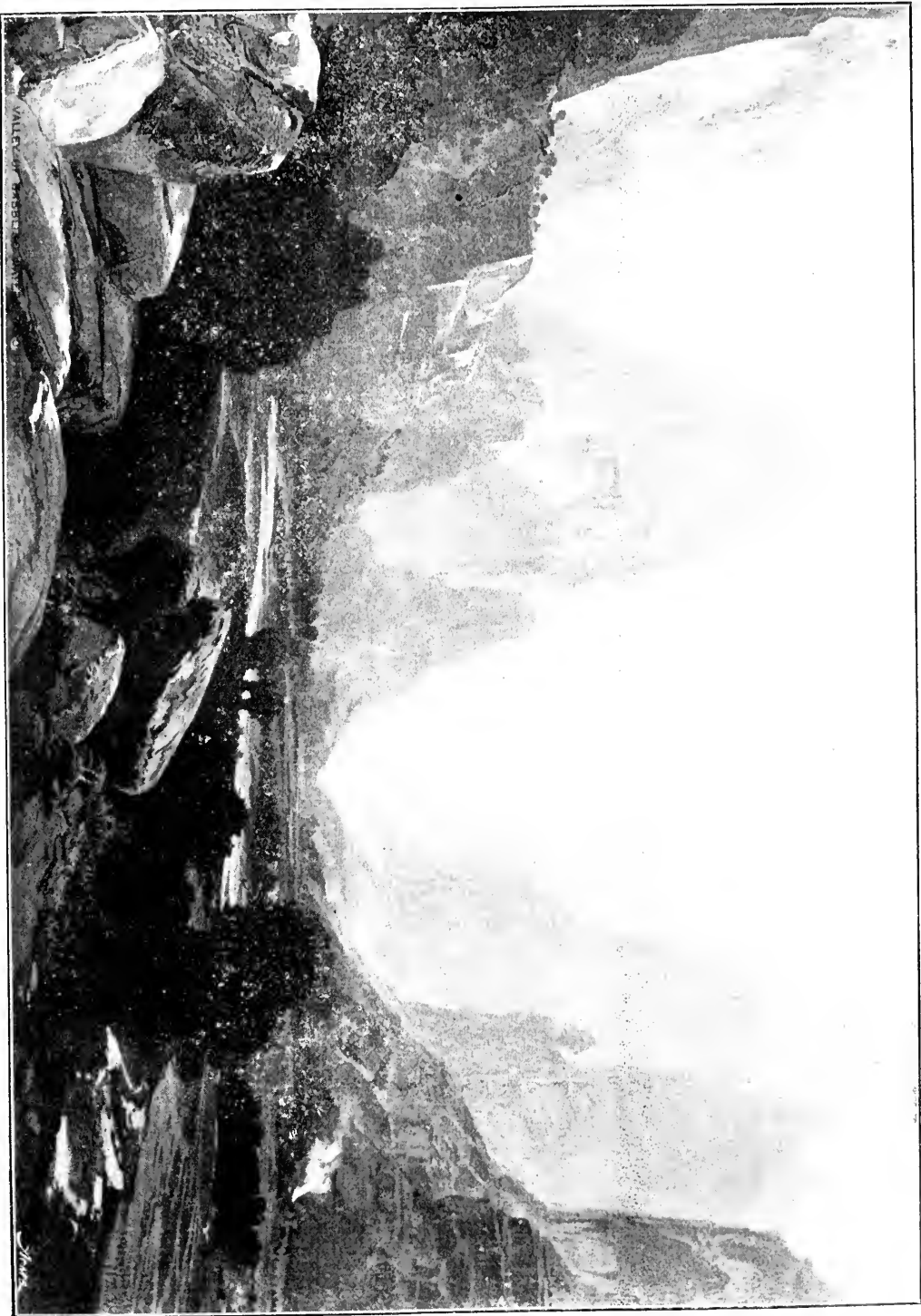
The descent of four hundred feet from the side of the gorge to the level of the river above the falls has to be made by a narrow winding path, among rough ledges of lava. Above the brink of the falls the whole breadth of the river is broken up by a dozen small islands, which the water has carved into fantastic forms, now rounding some into low domes, then sharpening others into mere pillars, and wearing out deep caves elsewhere. At the very brink of the fall a few twisted evergreens cling to the rock, and lean over the abyss of foam as if spell-bound by that same fatal fascination which is apt to take possession of men when standing above or by the side of masses of falling water.

Like Niagara, the fall resembles in shape a horse-shoe. The entire breadth is about seven hundred feet, and the greatest height attained at any point is about one hundred and ninety. The whole mass of cataract is one ever-varying sheet of spray. Below the falls, the right bank sinks into the water in a clear sharp precipice, but on the left side a narrow pebbly beach extends along the foot of the cliff.

Here, as so often on our way through this region of marvels, we are struck by the unique resemblance borne by these volcanic masses to architectural remains. Like the huge battlemented walls of a ruined city are the summits of the cliffs above the falls—an impression still further emphasized by the seamed layers of trachyte rock, reminding one of those famous piles of masonry at Mitylene.



GREAT FALLS OF SNAKE RIVER.



VALLEY OF THE BABBING WATERS.



But nowhere else, perhaps, in the world is to be encountered anything so extraordinary in this respect as in what has been not too happily named the "Valley of the Babbling Waters." If ever the Titans inhabited any spot on earth, it must surely have been here, where a vista of pyramidal columns seems to indicate the site of a stupendous temple, five thousand feet in height, whose stones could only have been piled upon each other by giant hands. There are no dwellers in that valley now, however; nor is its solitude ever disturbed, save at rare intervals, when some adventurous traveller makes his way across the intervening gorges which render it practically inaccessible. Hence this region of marvels, abounding in scenes as grand as that of which the accompanying view is but a faint illustration, must ever remain one of nature's holy places, into which only those who worship her truly may enter. To such, however, the revelation there given will more than compensate for all the toil undergone in pursuit of it.

The valley enclosed within these colossal walls is traversed by a branch of the Rio Virgin, which winds peacefully through it, contrasting forcibly with the wild grandeur of its surroundings, and offering no suggestion of the fact that to its action throughout long ages the formation of the valley itself is due; for there can be no doubt that the entire cañon of the Colorado, about two hundred miles in length, has been carved by running water out of the solid crust of the earth to a depth of from two thousand to five thousand feet—so deep, indeed, that, seen from the margin of the cliffs above, the largest rivers appear like threads.

Out of this enchanted land, however, we must now pass, permitting ourselves only a glance at two more scenes, widely different in character, yet each with an interest peculiar to itself, as we journey homewards.

Only those, however, who have realized the fascination of snow-capped mountain peaks need attempt the expedition before us now, which has for its goal the summit of the Sierra Nevada, or Snowy Range of the Pacific Coast. Nor will many even of that number care to undertake an ascent fraught with difficulties and perils sufficient to daunt the spirit of the most enthusiastic mountain climbers; for no bridle paths are here to be found, as in Switzerland, and firm and strong must be the foot that ventures to traverse these inaccessible

solitudes. In one respect, however, the ascent of the Sierra Nevada mountains is less formidable than that of the Swiss Alps, inasmuch as the traveller encounters infinitely fewer barriers in the shape of glaciers and snow-concealed crevasses, which have so often proved fatal to Alpine mountaineers. Indeed, this forms the most striking element of contrast between the Californian and Swiss ranges; instead of the unvaried whiteness of the latter, the Sierras display a dark green mantle of pine trees, whose branches wave in latitudes which one would think far beyond the reach of vegetation, and although they lend a somewhat sombre aspect to the scene, they also serve to divest the lofty peaks of their isolation by thus connecting them with the green earth from which they rear themselves so proudly, some of them to a height of fifteen thousand feet. One has but to imagine himself on the brink of the eminence in the foreground of the picture, overlooking the chasm from which the wreathing mists are ascending, to realize the sublimity of the scene—a scene never to be forgotten by the beholder, even although he dare linger there but for a moment.

From the sublime to the ridiculous we know there is but a step, and in this case that step is accomplished when the traveller, who has been rapt in contemplation of nature's grandest solitudes, finds himself within sound of the steam whistle with all its prosaic associations; for the Union Pacific Railway traverses this district, by which alone can the homeward journey be made. It will be some consolation, however, to know that it conducts to the far-famed Salt Lake of Utah and the City of the Mormons, towards which the eyes of the uxorious must ever be longingly turned.

The view of the Lake presented by the accompanying illustration is that obtained from a westerly direction. It is considered to be unique, there being nothing in any other part of the North American Continent comparable to it, and the traveller who happens to reach it at sunset, when the water reflects the golden glory of the sky, and the encircling hills are transfused with the peculiar purple glow that softens all their ruggedness and invests them with an air of repose, will have cause to congratulate himself, since at this hour the scene assumes its greatest loveliness. Marvellous and awe-inspiring as may have been the other aspects of nature on which he has been





SUMMIT OF THE SIERRA NEVADAS.

gazing, it is here that he will most desire to linger, even as one who has been listening to the grander and more mysterious strains of some majestic oratorio, finds rest in the simple melody that links his thoughts to dear familiar things.

Apart, however, from its beauty, the lake itself possesses special interest. Although clear as crystal, it is said to contain more brine than any other known body of water of so large a size, the quantity of salt being equal to about twenty per cent. Like the Dead Sea, it was supposed to be entirely destitute of animal life. The number of waterfowl inhabiting its shores suggested that there must be something in the waters to attract them, and led ultimately to the discovery that the lake teems with a small species of crustacean capable of thriving in very strong brine. Despite the fact that numerous streams have for ages been pouring themselves into the lake, it has no visible outlet; nor can the problem as to what becomes of all the water thus accumulated be solved otherwise than by assuming that it escapes by evaporation.

The great basin, at the bottom of which Salt Lake lies, is supposed to have been filled at one time by one vast inland sea of fresh water, from which rose the summits of the smaller mountain ranges in the shape of islands, so that on this supposition the Salt Lake is but the remnant of this sea.

For most visitors, however, Great Salt Lake City, which lies under the hills in the foreground of the picture, will possess a more lively, if less scientific interest than even this wonderful lake. It is considered the most beautiful city in the West, fully justifying the description given of it. The cool mountain waters which flow continually along both sides of its streets serve to refresh animal as well as vegetable life, while the fruit and ornamental trees, which abound throughout the city, add greatly not only to the beauty of the surroundings, but also to the comfort of the people.

With certain other comforts which the inhabitants of this city are said to enjoy all the world is familiar, and the fame of its self-elected king, Mr. Brigham Young, whose domestic establishment is said by some to have almost rivalled that of Solomon, must have excited in the minds of many less highly-favoured brethren, a feeling of mingled admiration and envy. The liberal interpretation

of Scripture upon which Mr. Brigham Young based the theory and practice of polygamy affords perhaps the best illustration extant of the devil's facility in quoting from the same source. But it is somewhat surprising to find him advocated by writers who, in the face of the incontrovertible evidence supplied by the nations among whom polygamy prevails of the utter demoralisation produced by it, can nevertheless undertake to apologise for, if not to justify, what has ever proved one of the most fruitful causes of misery. Some have even ventured to assert that this system is quite as much conducive to the welfare and happiness of the women themselves as the Christian institution of marriage, adducing in support of the assertion the absurd utterances of one or two dupes who with rare magnanimity profess devoted affection for their rivals. But so long as human nature remains what it is, so long will woman's heart demand undisputed possession of the object of its love, and resent the very thought of rivalry; and so well aware of this palpable truth were the originators of Mormonism that, in order to enlist the support and acquiescence of the women, they made their happiness hereafter dependent upon their acceptance of the tenets of their polygamistic creed—a very old device which has often been resorted to for similar reasons.

One objection, however, of an entirely different nature might have been supposed to militate powerfully against a plurality of wives, viz., economical considerations. These are found quite sufficient to deter many in our luxurious days from approaching Hymen's shrine, and there are probably few who do not find the maintenance of one wife fully equal to the extent of their income—sometimes, alas, even beyond it. But in the case of the Mormons this objection is obviated by the simple expedient of making the several wives each earn her own living, thus dispensing with our modern grievances connected with domestic service, which in a Mormon household, or rather barracks, is a thing unknown. Adopting this practical method, hesitating bachelors need hesitate no longer; only it is to be feared that the desirable end is more likely of accomplishment among the Mormons themselves than in the less enlightened quarters of civilization.

Despite so strong an inducement to remain, however, we who are unfortunate enough to possess



GREAT SALT LAKE.

only one wife, whose consent to the adoption of Mormon principles we hardly dare hope for, must turn our faces homewards, leaving this Utopia of the wild West to the enjoyment of its matrimonial privileges. Should any enterprising pioneers of the Woman's Rights mission desire a field for the extension of those efforts which have already revolutionised society, we would recommend them to attack this stronghold of masculine despotism, where, should their eloquence prevail in rousing their benighted sisters to a sense of their humiliation, victory would be certain and complete, inasmuch as even the doughtiest son of Adam would hardly hold his own against fifty daughters of Eve all in arms against his usurped authority. Nay, we would even venture to predict that, in consonance with that tendency to extremes which characterises all revolutions, every Mormon lady would ere long find herself the queen and ruler of half-a-dozen devoted consorts, each striving to outdo the other in legal service to his sovereign lady.

Not without regret and many "a long lingering look" behind do we quit the precincts of the enchanted land through which we have been wandering. It is like closing the last page of some delightful romance, which has beguiled us for a little from the contemplation of the prosaic realities of daily life. Our regret, however, is tempered with gratitude, that, despite the levelling influence of science, which seems to be sweeping ruthlessly aside all the sweet romance and beauty that has gladdened human life from the beginning, nature has still in reserve for those who love her some enchanted ground, impregnable and inviolable, where she unfolds her glorious mysteries, and utters herself in language not obscure to those who have ears to hear it. In the clamour and din of this iron age, men but seldom hear that voice: it is drowned by the grinding of machinery, and their vision is circumscribed by the prison walls within which their daily bread is earned. Formerly human life was invested with the charm that broods in encircling mountains, gushing

streams, waving trees, green fields, fragrant flowers, sea and sky, and song of bird; now, all these wholesome influences are banished by the sights and sounds of the city. And who will say that the exchange is to man's advantage? Over all the land, "deserted villages" tell of the decline of that agricultural life from which the very sinews of the nation have ever been supplied; and with the crowding of the population into towns, there has arisen, in place of the simple, natural living, by which alone happiness is realised, an artificial mode of existence engendering discontent and envy.

"Nature intended that the population should be diffused over the soil in proportion to its extent," says Sir Walter Scott. "We have accumulated in huge cities and smothering manufactories the numbers which should be spread over the face of a country: and what wonder that they should be corrupted? We have turned healthful and pleasant brooks into morasses and pestiferous lakes: what wonder the soil should be unhealthy?"

But with the solution of these problems it is not our province to deal; and the digression may be excused on the plea that we have been betrayed into it by the contemplation of scenes so sublime that, in contrast, the work-a-day world, to which we are now returning, seems blank as the walls of a prison, and excites our compassion for all confined therein. We have breathed the air of freedom on mountain heights, and may be pardoned a sigh on coming down to the beaten level once more.

Wonderland lies behind us: we may never behold its unique scenes again; yet memory will preserve for us in those hues that never fade all its brightest pictures, to cheer us in days to come.

To those far-seeing legislators, whose sagacity has preserved for future generations all the marvels of the Yellowstone Park, we once more offer our grateful thanks for the priceless boon of a recreation ground protected from Vandalism and the equally destructive agency of a presumptuous science, to which nothing is either wonderful or sacred.



## Rough Wind that Moanest Loud.

Words by SHELLEY.

Music by W. AUGUSTUS BARRATT.

VOICE.

*p*

Rough wind that moan - est loud.

PIANO.

*Andante, affettuoso.*

*pp*

*pp*

*rall.*

Grief too sad for song ;.....

*tempo.*

Wild wind when sul - len cloud

*mf* *rall.* *mf*

Knells all the night long... .. Sad storm..... whose

*Cantando.*  
*mf* *tempo.*

*Ped.*

tears are vain, Bare woods whose branch - es strain, Deep caves and

*mf*

*rall.*

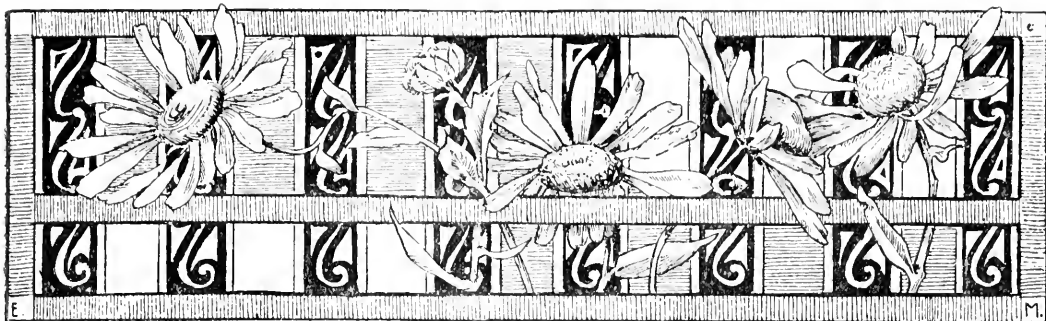
drea - - - ry main,..... Wail,..... wail,....

*pp*

*mf rall.*

wail for the world's wrong.....

*p* *rall.*



## WHITE TURRETS.

AN OUTLINE.

BY MRS. MOLESWORTH,

*Author of "Carrots"; "The Palace in the Garden"; "A Charge Fulfilled";  
"The Red Grange"; "Studies and Stories," etc., etc.*

### CHAPTER IV.—(continued).

"If such a thing could be as my living with *her*," thought Winifred, "that would be ideal. Whatever work I take up, I could manage to fit it in to such an arrangement. And if I decide on writing as my principal occupation, of course I shall be very independent—pen and ink can do their work anywhere."

She watched Miss Norreys and the tall stranger—a man of forty or thereabouts—slightly grey, and with a somewhat peculiar stoop.

"How good she is," thought Winifred, "I can see he is boring her. I wonder what they are talking about."

Better, perhaps, for her that she could not hear.

"I did not interrupt you, I hope," the newcomer was saying. "You seemed rather engrossed with that little person on the sofa. But I came here on purpose to see you."

"I hoped, too, I should see *you*," she replied. "No, the girl over there is a stranger to me. Helena Campion introduced us—rather rashly, for the poor thing imagines I can help her, and I really can't. She has to make her way in the world, and wants advice. I am sorry for her, but—I am really *so* busy."

"My dear, you must not take any more burdens upon you. You really must *not*," said her old friend, decidedly. "What does the girl want? She is a lady, I suppose—well educated? I might introduce her to the 'Reasonable Help Society.' They are increasing their staff, and she might get a small salary."

Miss Norreys looked and felt grateful.

"It would be most good of you," she said, warmly. "I *should* be glad to help her, or, indeed, anyone so placed, but the little I can do is in my own line, and I am overwhelmed with applications for assistance and advice in that direction."

Mr. Montague nodded sympathisingly.

"No one would believe it," continued Hertha, with a half-rueful smile, "I could easily spend all my time in answering letters, trying songs, listening to would-be vocalists—and where would my own work be then? Yet the service which each asks—the individual service—seems so small. But how they mount up!"

"It is the same in every department," her friend replied. "Once your name gets before the world people seem to think you are common property and have no right to your own time and strength. Literary people are even more bothered than you, if that is any comfort to you. For it is not every one that can deceive him or herself into imagining they possess musical gifts, whereas *everybody* now-a-days has a try at authorship."

And if Hertha's smile had been rueful, Mr. Montague's was grim.

"This girl is *not* musical, Heaven be praised!" Miss Norreys replied.

"I rejoice to hear it—for your sake," he answered, fervently. "Tell me her name," and he drew out a tiny note-book.

"Maryon—Miss Maryon—that is all I know," said Hertha.

"Miss Marion," he wrote, "Marion *what?*"

"Oh, it is her surname—M-a-r-y, not 'i,'" she corrected. "Lady Campion mentioned it in her note. A Miss Maryon who was dying to meet us, or some nonsense."

"It is too bad," Mr. Montague repeated. "But I will see what I can do, and she must call at the office to be examined as to her capabilities. 'Maryon,' an uncommon name. There are some rich people—a very old family—Maryons down in Brakeshire."

"Ah, she can't belong to them, poor girl," said Hertha.

And then, feeling she had done her duty, she and Mr. Montague turned to other things.

## CHAPTER V.

### MISAPPREHENSION AND MISGIVING.

LADY CAMPION'S drawing-room continued to fill—to fill and to empty—for as some went out, others came in. And everywhere and at all moments, Hertha Norreys was surrounded and eagerly greeted.

"It is wonderful how much she is made of," thought Winifred from her corner. "Not, of course, that she does not deserve it, but I have so often been told that the best people are not the most appreciated by the common herd."

The expression would scarcely have been deemed appropriate. If there was one thing Lady Campion prided herself on, it was that her "habitués" formed a very *uncommon* herd indeed. *Her* lions and lionesses must be well dressed and charming—perfectly well-bred and unexceptionable. And as Winifred heard the names—now and then mentioned to her in passing by her good-natured hostess, or by some of the friends she introduced the girl to, with the excuse that she was "a perfect stranger, never been in London before"—of men and women she had hitherto revered from afar, she began to allow to herself that if she had known it was to be so much of a party, she would have dressed better. "Though I never imagined people like 'so-and-so' cared about dressing at all," she added to herself.

The rooms were thinning—indeed they had never been what to more experienced eyes would

have seemed very full, when Mrs. Balderson—followed by Celia, Eric bringing up the rear—came in.

"What a lovely girl," said a voice beside Winifred; and turning with quick pleasure, she saw that the speaker was Miss Norreys' Mr. Montague. And close beside him, though Winifred had not been aware of her proximity, stood Hertha herself.

"Yes indeed," she replied, warmly. "She is like a beautiful lily."

Celia was better—at least more becomingly dressed than her sister, and her taller, more graceful figure shewed whatever she wore to advantage. Mrs. Balderson had reviewed her before they went out, and Winifred had taken her usual interest in Celia's appearance, attiring herself, later in the afternoon, with her customary indifference to everything but neatness.

A flush of gratification rose to her face at the words she overheard, and moving forward so as to approach Hertha a little more nearly, she said in a low voice,

"I am so glad you admire her, she is my sister, my younger sister."

Miss Norreys turned. For a moment she half doubted if she herself was addressed. In the interest of meetings and talk she had almost forgotten Winifred's existence. But now the face, looking up at her so brightly and eagerly, attracted her much more than before.

"Your sister, Miss Maryon," she said, with a sunny smile on her face. "Well, I need not repeat what I said as you heard it. But it is certainly true."

And she felt drawn to the girl as she had not hitherto done.

"May I, oh, may I introduce her to you?" Winifred went on, and encouraged by Miss Norreys'

"By all means, if you like."

"Celia, Celia!" she said, anxiously, for Celia, at that moment, was being monopolised by some friends of Mrs. Balderson's. "Celia," when the girl at last heard her, "do come here. I want to introduce you to Miss Norreys."

Celia was feeling profoundly shy, and her shyness, as usual, veiled itself by excessive stiffness. The impression she made upon Hertha was not the most favourable.

"She is very pretty, *very* pretty," thought Miss



Norreys, "but evidently nothing more, and very spoilt. This poor dear elder sister denies herself, no doubt, to do all she can for her. Their very dress shews it. I must not be prejudiced. I daresay this girl is a noble character. I must be kind to her."

And it was with increased cordiality she bade Winifred good-bye, having already got her address and promised to write to her.

"Is she not *too* delightful?" said Winifred, ecstasically, to her sister.

"She has evidently taken a great fancy to *you*," replied Celia, evasively. "And that is *the* thing."

In her heart she felt a touch of disappointment.

"Why did Miss Norreys look at me with a kind of disapproval?" she asked herself. "She surely can't be stuck-up or capricious—she has such a *good* face."

"Do you think she will really be able to help us—you?" she went on.

"I am sure of it. I had not time to tell her about *you*, Celia, but you see once *I* get an independent footing, it will be all right for you. I managed to tell her a good deal. I am certain she sympathises with the position, the longing for emancipation—oh, yes, I feel that I have got my foot on the first rung of the ladder," she concluded, enthusiastically.

Some days passed, nevertheless, without any more of the ladder appearing through the haze. Miss Norreys made no sign. The days passed pleasantly, however, so pleasantly that Winifred sometimes felt half guilty for enjoying them and making no further effort towards the realisation of those schemes for the future, which had been the underlying "*but*" of her own and, indeed, of Celia's visit to London.

It was difficult to do anything, or to know what to do. Mrs. Balderson, in her innocence of these girls having any thoughts or aspirations other than those she remembered in her own girlhood, exhausted herself in the endeavour to make them enjoy themselves, to "have a good time," and she succeeded. They had never had a better—never indeed half so good!

They were, however, scarcely free to do anything but what was planned for them. Morning, noon, and night, for the first two weeks of their stay, engagements of all kinds were the order of the day. Shoppings, exhibitions, concerts, plays, afternoon

teas, occasional dinner-parties at home, or, more rarely, an invitation for one girl to accompany her host and hostess to dine elsewhere, one or two very mild winter dances even—what, in the old and less sophisticated days, would have been called "carpet-dances"—all these things followed each other in such quick rotation as to make life in London, even in November, seem to these country girls a sort of kaleidoscope.

"I suppose we are learning a good deal, even unconsciously. I suppose it is all a sort of experience it is well to go through," said Winifred, dubiously. "But it is not what I expected. I see what it is, Celia, I shall have to come up again on my own account, really, to go into things and arrange something. Father and mother cannot object now that I have got friends here, and some one to advise me."

"Do you mean Miss Norreys?" said Celia.

"Yes—and—I should not be very surprised if Lady Campion asked me to stay with her, do you know? She was quite interested the other day, when I said a little to her—just a very little—of my wish to *do something*. She seemed quite struck by it, and said she would like to talk more about it."

"Are you sure she understood what you meant? She may have thought you would like to help in her Decoration Guilds, or Shakespeare Recitals, or some of those things she has so many of?" said Celia. "There are heaps of those half-play, half-work things for girls who don't need to work really, you know."

Celia had guessed rightly. Lady Campion, though she had inadvertently conveyed to Miss Norreys a wrong impression of Miss Maryon's position, had no thought of suggesting to the girl any work of the kind Winifred had set before herself.

Her face clouded over a little at Celia's words.

"But I don't want to be thought that sort of girl," she said. "I don't want to be thought rich, and I am *not* rich. I am dependent on papa. Besides, if I were—if I had been a son, I should not have been debarred from a profession because I was the heir to 'White Turrets' and Bushey-reeds, and all the property. Why should a woman be treated differently in such a case? Why should *her* wings be clipped and she be restricted to a narrow, monotonous life any more than a man?"

Celia scented danger. She saw that Winifred was lashing herself up to one of her "revolts," as she called them herself sometimes, and she knew that any, even the slightest suspicion of less sympathy than she had hitherto been able to give would be sharply resented. Yet she was too honest to evade the possible discordance, painful though the smallest disagreement with her sister would be to her. For a moment or two she sat silent. Then she said boldly :

"I am not sure of that ground, Winifred. I have been seeing things a little differently lately. If you had been a son—placed as you are—I doubt if it would have been thought right for you to have a profession—outside work, so to say—when there is so much to do at home."

"What nonsense!" said Winifred. "Do you mean to say that because a man had property to look after he would be debarred from cultivating his special gifts? Why some, perhaps not many, but some of our greatest men—artists as well as statesmen and writers—have been rich men—men of property. No, it is only *women* who are always hedged in, with one excuse or another."

"But you haven't any special gifts," said Celia, "at least you always say so. Your wish is to be of use, and—to be independent," and in her heart she felt the latter should have been placed first. "You can't be a statesman, and I don't think even you would regret that for a woman. But you can be of any amount of *use*, at home. And you could study all sorts of things about the management of property that would help you to be still more so."

She felt half frightened at her own daring, and her fears were not without foundation. Winifred stared at her, not quite sure if she was going to let herself get angry or not.

"What has come over you, Celia?" she said at last. "You are worse than Louise. Who has been talking to you and putting all these ideas into your head? Do you apply them to yourself too? What about your longing to paint—to have really good instruction?"

"I still long for it," said Celia, "and I *think* I still believe it would be right for me to have it. I think I should test myself so as to find out if I have a gift, a decided gift. For, if so, I should cultivate it. In my case no definite responsibilities are before me in life, as is the case with you, yet—"

"Rubbish," said Winifred, crossly. "There are just as many before you and Louise as before me. I shall never marry, and you and she will be just as much concerned in the management of things some day as I."

"Perhaps," said Celia, "but not just yet, in any case. And yet—as I was going to say—I don't quite see at present what is right for me to do. If there are many difficulties in the way, if it would cause unhappiness at home, perhaps it would be my duty to wait—to wait even for the testing myself," and she sighed. "I don't want to leave home for the sake of leaving home, but I do want to know if I am deceiving myself in thinking I *have* a gift. And father and mother are so kind and reasonable. I don't think I need give up the idea."

"You are very selfish, dreadfully selfish, though perhaps you don't know it," said Winifred. "You would make out that what *you* want is right just because you want it. But I, many years older than you, who have thought over these questions for the last ten years—"

"You are not many years older than I, and ten years ago you were *ever* so much younger than I am now. You were a child," interrupted Celia.

"—who have thought about these questions ever since I could think at all," Winifred resumed, calmly, for, to do her justice, she was by no means bad-tempered, and seldom lost her self-control, "am to give up my deepest and most cherished hopes, because—no, I really can't say why! Because I want to leave the beaten track, I suppose."

"You won't see things any other way," said Celia, "so it's no use talking about it. Perhaps it may be best for you to try the experiment, though in a different way from me. Anyway, don't let us quarrel about it, whatever we do, dearest Winifred. Of course your coming to live in London would make it all infinitely nicer for me, if," and a troubled expression crossed her face, "if it is really right for us both to leave home."

"There is Louise at home. She asks nothing better than to jog-trot along for ever in the same monotonous way. She is an anachronism. She would have been perfectly happy a hundred years ago, or even longer ago than that, when it never occurred to any one that a woman *could* want anything more exciting than her spinning-wheel and her tapestry frame."

"Or her napery press and pot-pourri jars,"

added Celia, with a smile. "Well, after all, there is to me a wonderful charm about those days; there must have been a great deal of tenderness and delicacy about a lady's life, which get rubbed off now-a-days. And there is a good deal of sense in what Louise says. Monotony is not the worst evil. Why, lots of married women have monotonous lives."

"If they have, it has been of their own choice," said Winifred. "What I complain of is the being condemned to narrowness and dullness if you don't marry—short of marriage, a girl is allowed no other possibility of outlet."

"But," protested Celia, "though that may be the case for some, or many even, when there *are* duties that you are born into, surely it is different? And even beyond that—is it not possible that what you call dull, narrow lives, filled with stupid little odds and ends of usefulness, that don't seem usefulness at all, may be the very discipline needed by some—may be *meant* for them?"

"Oh," said Winifred, impatiently, "if you are going off to the very highest grounds of all, I suppose the being an old maid in an attic may be the best discipline for old maids in attics, but it is the *system* of narrowing down women's lives that is wrong. And if in their girlhood some of the old maids had rebelled, and insisted on taking their stand as men do, things would have been better by now. There must be individual resistance. Think what Hertha Norreys' life would have been if she had simply accepted things!"

"Ah, but it was different for her. She had a great talent, and she needed to work," said Celia. "In a case like hers there could be no doubt. I really don't pity girls who *need* to work so much as others in some ways. Not the rich—they can always, if they wish, find ways of being useful: the very conditions of their lives bring opportunities. But girls whose lives are very uninteresting, and yet not poor exactly, I pity *them*—girls who even can scarcely afford to get books to read."

"They should throw nonsensical dignity to the winds and work," said Winifred.

"Yes, I think so too," said Celia.

She had been thinking a great deal lately—more really and thoroughly and dispassionately than ever before in her life. She was coming to realise that, even to questions of apparently purely personal interest, there may be—there is—more

than one side. And the starting point of all these meditations had been the half unconscious remarks of Eric Balderson, the day he sat beside her at dinner and endeavoured to make amends for Mr. Fancourt's neglect.

The mention of Miss Norreys made Winifred determine to remain inactive no longer.

"I must write to her," she decided. "I must beg her to let me see her once before I leave. We shall certainly not stay more than a week longer" (their original three weeks had already expired) "and I must have some plan for the future before I go home, otherwise I shall really feel that the golden opportunity of this visit has been wasted. I must arrange something about where to stay when I come up again, to go into things more definitely. There is no chance now of Lady Campion's asking me, unluckily."

For Sir Hugh Campion had had a return of bronchitis, and was ordered abroad for the winter, his wife, of course, accompanying him. This had happened so suddenly that Lady Campion and Hertha had not met since the afternoon of Winifred's introduction to the latter. No opportunity, therefore, had arisen of rectifying the mistaken impression Lady Campion had unintentionally conveyed to her friend of Miss Maryon's position and circumstances.

And all these days the remembrance of the eager, bright-eyed girl, who had so abruptly appealed to her for advice and assistance, had clung to Hertha with almost annoying pertinacity. Winifred—though she did not think of her by that name, never having heard it—would be expecting to hear from her, she felt sure. Yet what could she say? She herself had heard nothing more from Mr. Montague—there was no use in making appointments, or inviting the girl to come to see her, when she had absolutely nothing to tell her. And an appointment, or a "told-off" afternoon, in Hertha's busy life, meant a great deal more than some people would find it easy to believe.

But, as often happens, the very first post after Winifred had despatched her own note to Miss Norreys, brought a letter to herself from Hertha. A letter that filled her with excitement and sanguine anticipations.

"Dear Miss Maryon," it ran,

"I have not forgotten your wish and

my promise that we should meet again. But I have waited a few days in hopes of having something to tell you of which might make it more worth your while to come to see me. And to my great pleasure these hopes are to some extent fulfilled. By a lucky chance, just after you had spoken to me, I came across the very person the most able to help in such a case. Through his kindness, I have a proposal to make to you. I will tell you all particulars if you will call here to-morrow, Friday, at half-past four in the afternoon, when I shall be disengaged for a short time. The whole thing seems really a piece of good luck, for, as I told you, I have neither experience of, nor influence in, any line of life but my own.

“Yours very truly,

“HERTHA BENEDICT NORREYS.”

Winifred's eyes gleamed. But she kept her delight to herself, merely dashing off a word of rapturous gratitude to her new friend, and eager acceptance of her invitation. She said nothing to either her sister or Mrs. Balderson beyond announcing the fact that “to-morrow afternoon” she had an engagement which would prevent her going out with them.

Mrs. Balderson was annoyed. She felt, with justice, that, having given herself so much trouble for her young guests and to a great extent disorganised her usual arrangements in their behalf, she should at least have been consulted as to any independent engagements they wished to make.

“I do not understand Winifred,” she said to her son. “Her manners, at least her ways, are certainly rather like those of an advanced or “emancipated” young woman of the day. Yet surely it is impossible that she can have got hold of any of those ideas in that quiet, sheltered, almost old-fashioned country life of theirs. And her mother is such a perfect model of good breeding.”

Eric shrugged his shoulders.

“*Quien sabe*,” he said. “Ideas are in the air, I suppose. You never can tell where they will crop up. Why, even little Celia has her theories—only she is very different from her sister, both in character and temperament. But I wouldn't worry about Winifred, my dear mother. You have been more than good to them both, and they

know it—at any rate, Celia does—and they will be leaving very soon.”

“Yes, I shall be sorry for Celia to go. She is very sweet. But I could not take the responsibility of Winifred for long. As I said, I do not understand her. Don't be afraid, however, of my making any fuss. I would not on any account spoil the last few days of their visit by beginning to find fault.”

So Winifred set off, uninterfered with, to call on Miss Norreys, while Celia accompanied Mrs. Balderson to the large annual meeting of a charitable society, in which the kind-hearted and liberal woman was much interested.

Celia was interested too. She had the happy power of throwing herself very thoroughly into the surroundings of the moment, and her mind in the last two or three weeks had begun to open in several new directions.

But all through the speeches and reports which followed each other in rapid succession, and which she would have liked to listen to with an unpre-occupied mind, there kept rising the half uneasy thought: “I wonder where Winifred has gone, and why she did not tell me all about it. Can it be on account of what I said the other day? I hope she won't do anything rash.”

For some things, Celia felt she would not be sorry to be home again—“with mother and Louise”—yet the sense of disappointment that she had made no way towards the realization of her own ardent wish, was keen to her. And Winifred did not seem to sympathise in this as she used to do.

“She called me selfish,” thought Celia, “because I said that perhaps—perhaps it might be different for her and me. I wonder why we don't seem quite as much at one as when we were at home.”

## CHAPTER VI.

### AN OPENING.

MISS NORREYS had a tiny home of her own, at some considerable distance from the Balderson mansion, which was about as far west as it could be to be yet in a thoroughly good position. The house in question was tiny in some ways, but it scarcely gave one that impression, for it contained one very large room, originally, in all probability,

intended for a studio, which Hertha had converted into a music room, a small so-called drawing-room or boudoir leading into it, being her own private sanctum.

She lived alone now, save for an old servant, who had never left her—who had solved the problem of out-staying the proverbial twenty-one years without degenerating from the "faithful friend" of the middle seven, into the "unendurable tyrant" of the last term. But Miss Norreys had not been long alone. Only three short years ago, the mother, the adored mother, whose later life had been rendered peaceful and happy by the daughter's brave energy, the young brother, whose education and start in the world was all his sister's doing, had both been with her. Now the former was at rest in the unknown country, which yet, as life goes on, and we think of the sweet souls who have preceded us there, loses the dread sense of strangeness—seems almost to grow more familiar than this side of the river. And the other, Hertha's dearly-loved Jasper, was away in India, the right place for him as a poor man, and where he was already rewarding her for her devotion by his unexceptionable and promising life.

"If only it were not so far away," she would say to herself sometimes, as many another woman in England says to herself every day. And then she would let her thoughts revert to the time when they were all three together, to the struggles which, viewed in the tender light of the past, seemed to have been nothing but happiness, to the delight, doubled by being shared, with which she had realized the fact of her first success.

"How proud we were when we took this house!" she said to herself. "How hot Jasper made himself with hanging up all the curtains and things in the studio! How could I ever have murmured at *anything* then!"

It was not often she allowed herself to indulge in these reminiscences. She was full of real sentiment, but she had a wholesome dread of anything approaching sentimentalism, of which, living alone as she did, she knew she must beware. Only sometimes, in the enforced pauses of her busy life, she would allow herself the "treat," as she called it, of going back to the past for a while, though there were other pages of her girl-life which, for the sake of her own peace of mind, she kept resolutely under lock and key.

She was sitting idle for once—her thoughts busied with the bright and peaceful memories of the two so dear to her—on the day that she was expecting Miss Maryon to call. It was not often that she could afford to spare an afternoon, and her doing so now was out of the purest and most disinterested kindness to the girl who had appealed to her so unexpectedly. And when Hertha made up her mind to a thing she did it thoroughly.

"To judge by her talk at Helena Campion's, that day," she said to herself, "she will not be content with half-an-hour or so. I had better arrange to be free for the rest of the afternoon. Besides, of course, there really will be a good deal to discuss, for I am sure she is quite extraordinarily inexperienced despite her funny little assumptions of wisdom."

Almost on the stroke of the appointed hour, the bell rang.

"Come," thought Miss Norreys, as she heard Winifred's clear, decided tones, enquiring for herself, "she is punctual, and so much the better. So many of these would-be independent and self-reliant young women prejudice others almost from the first by their airy disregard of every one else's convenience."

No—to a certain extent Winifred was really practical and reliable. She was grateful, too, to Hertha, and so anxious to stand well with her that the last twenty minutes had been spent in walking up and down the street till within a minute or so of the appointed hour.

She came in, looking eager and yet a little shy. Her bright short-sighted eyes glanced with evident interest round the pretty little room, opening at one end, "*à deux battants*," into the large studio, which was but dimly lighted, then returned to rest with unmistakable admiration upon her young hostess.

"Oh how delightful, how charming it all is!" she exclaimed, impulsively. "Oh, Miss Norreys, thank you so much, so very much, for letting me come to see you."

"I am pleased to see you. I shall be very glad if I can be of any use to you," Hertha replied. It was not in her essentially generous nature to repress the girl whose enthusiasm was plainly sincere. "Will you take your cloak off? My rooms are not cold. We shall have tea directly. In the meantime, before we begin to talk, would

you like to see my little domain? I am very proud of my music-room."

She led the way into the larger room, turning up the light as she entered it. It was very tastefully arranged—some few good pictures, one or two pretty cabinets and a respectable number of well-bound books filling glass-doored cases at one end, all relics of more prosperous times, giving a certain dignity to the whole. There were two pianos, and a harp stood in one corner.

Winifred stood entranced.

"It is quite charming," she said, "just the sort of nest one would long to have."

Hertha was amused at the expression. She considered her big room much more than a "nest."

"My young friend does not seem to realise how rare such quarters are in London," she thought. "I suppose she is used to a bare, but perhaps not very small, country vicarage."

"Yes, I am very lucky indeed," she replied. "A room like this is a great 'find' in London."

"Is it really?" said Winifred, peering up at the ceiling. "Oh dear, it is *just* what I should like."

Miss Norreys repressed the desire to tell her that, as things were with her, she might as well wish for Aladdin's palace at once.

"She will learn by experience," she said to herself.

"And the whole thing—your life, yourself," Winifred went on, "it is like the realisation of a dream to me. Your splendid independence and freedom—just think of the contrast between you and an ordinary girl living at home in slavery, or, at least, in a sort of prolonged childhood, with no personal standing, no liberty to follow her own intuitions."

A shadow crossed Hertha's beautiful forehead.

"I have not always lived alone like this," she said. "Not, indeed, for very long. This house is endeared to me by having spent several years in it with my two"—her voice faltered a little—"my mother and my brother. I have never wished for what you call 'independence.' I was too happy while I had one or two who cared to direct me. I loved being treated like a child."

"You must have been *most* fortunately placed," said Winifred.

"I was," replied Hertha. "My parents were

just *perfect*. It was circumstances and"—she hesitated, for she was touching on uncertain ground—"a good deal, perhaps the fact of my having a voice, a talent, which led me to leave the beaten path. No desire to throw off the dear home ties. I have often wondered what I should have done with my voice had I not *needed* to utilise it; how far it would have been right to give up time to cultivating it; how far, so to say, the possession of a voice means 'a vocation.' That sounds like a poor attempt at a pun," she ended off with a smile.

But Winifred did not notice her little piece of fun.

"You would have done just what you have done," she burst out. "You would never have been content in the beaten track—in the narrow, hedged-in life, which is what most women lead."

"I'm afraid I should have been very content," said Hertha. "I am not at all sure that I am not by nature very lazy. The energy of many—I think I might say of most women now-a-days—appalls me. I don't agree with you that the 'narrow, hedged-in lives' are the lot of the 'most,' not in London any how."

"Well no, perhaps not in London," Winifred agreed. "That is why I want to come here."

"And, oh dear!" said Miss Norreys with again a little smile that seemed more of the nature of a sigh, "you don't know how I long sometimes for that sort of life. Fancy, with parents and sisters and an old-fashioned home in the country—the sort of place that has not changed much for hundreds of years, where you can distil your own lavender water and make great jars full of pot-pourri, where there is a lady's walk and a ghost, and where you know every saint's face in the windows at church—oh what a lovely life it might be! If my lot had fallen in such lines, I hope I should have had the energy to cultivate my voice and to use it to give pleasure to others, to poor folk above all; but oh, how joyfully I should have hurried home from my enforced visits to London! I used to dream of such a life," she added. "Now it is different. I am alone. No place could be much 'home' to me."

A curious expression flickered over Winifred's face.

"How—how strange," she said, vaguely. "I did not think you were like that, Miss Norreys."

"I suppose it is poetry," she went on, "I suppose you are poetical in a way I don't understand. Have you ever seen the sort of place you describe? If you had such a home it would pretty certainly not have the charm you imagine."

"Oh, yes it would," said Hertha. "It *would* have had, I mean. I am not high-flown. There must be such a beautiful content in feeling there you are, in a centre where God has put you—where you can be of use to many, 'hedged in' to clear and distinct duties and responsibilities. I suppose I needed the other side or it would not have come to me. I might have been lazy."

She took a certain satisfaction in repeating this, for, though she really meant all she said, there was something about Winifred's half dogmatic, half matter-of-fact insistence on her own views and opinions that provoked Hertha to a kind of contradiction—almost to wish to shock her!

Just then the entrance of tea caused a momentary diversion. There was nothing of the Bohemian about Hertha. The little table was set out with scrupulous though simple care. There was a touch of genuine "old-fashionedness," very distinct from the modern affectations and imitations of picturesque quaintness, about her, which added to her charm by its unexpectedness. But Winifred Maryon, for reasons which will explain themselves, was not specially struck by it. She accepted all she saw, in her inexperience, as a matter of course.

"Have I ever seen such a house as I have been talking about?" Miss Norreys went on, as she poured out the tea into two *really* old willow pattern cups, adding sugar and cream from a small silver bowl and jug, worn thin with many years of daily use. "No, not *exactly*. There was a place which we once had reason to think would have been ours, which could have been made perfectly beautiful—but it never came into our hands, and now it is pulled down and the land built over. As things are, I do not regret it. Will you have another cup of tea, Miss Maryon? Yes; that's right. And now we must get to business, and talk about you, not me."

But Winifred's enthusiasm for her new friend was so great that even the absorbing interest of her own affairs paled before it.

"I love so to hear about yourself and what you think and feel," she said. "I cannot believe we really differ about anything. You have beautified your

life so, unconsciously, that you can scarcely realise the dulness and monotony of some women's lives."

"Oh, yes, indeed I do," replied Miss Norreys. "If I did not, do you think you would now be sitting here with me? I could never pretend sympathy I did not feel. Lady Campion told me a little, very little, about you, but of course I understand you far better from yourself. I sympathise with all my heart in your wish to do something—to strike out a career for yourself."

"Oh yes," said Winifred, breathlessly.

"No one could sympathise in it more heartily than I," Hertha went on. "For years, you know, I worked hard for my mother and brother, and—though I don't need you to tell me about it—I am sure that some similar motive inspires you, as well as the wish to feel yourself *someone, something*, which an energetic woman, placed as you are, must feel."

The colour rose a little in Winifred's face. Hertha, with instinctive delicacy, glanced away. She knew that direct owning to poverty was painful to some people.

"Ye-es," said Miss Maryon, at last. "It is—there are—more than one motive. I want to help my sister, too, the one you saw. I am positively certain she has great talent for painting if she had a chance of cultivating it."

"Indeed?" said Hertha, "that simplifies *her* line of action. What she has to do is to test herself. Then you want to help her to get good teaching, and, I suppose, to make a home for her in London? Yes, she is too young and too beautiful to attempt anything of the kind without someone to take care of her. And—can you both be spared at home?"

"We have another sister at home, and, though my father is in delicate health, my mother is well and active. We have thought about it for a long time—Celia and I."

"Poor souls! Two fewer to provide for no doubt is a consideration," thought Hertha.

"Does Mrs. Balderson know about it? Is she likely to help you in any way?" she asked aloud. "I do not know her personally, but I have heard she is truly kind."

"She has been very kind in having us here. But she would not sympathise in our plans. She is—old-fashioned, I suppose. She thinks girls should stay quietly at home."

"Ah, indeed," said Hertha, her mind rapidly picturing to itself what, in such a case, the "staying quietly at home" must mean: the poor, unbeautiful surroundings, the colourless lives, the pain and almost degradation of the terrible "genteel poverty."

"But she *is* very kind," repeated Winifred, her conscience smiting her, "she asked us out of kindness. She would like us to marry," with a little smile. "But of course I never shall. She likes Celia the best, I think."

Again Hertha's imagination jumped to hasty conclusions.

"I see it all," she thought. "She wants to show the pretty one to advantage, to give her a chance, as people say." . . . "And is there any prospect of Celia's marrying?" she asked.

Winifred shook her head.

"Oh no!" she replied, with a touch of something like indignation, which Miss Norreys could not understand. "Celia would never change so—she would not desert me."

"But my dear Miss Maryon, it might be a very good thing, if and always supposing, of course, that it was someone she cared for," said Hertha. "Placed as——"

"There is no use discussing remote contingencies," interrupted Winifred, and Miss Norreys, imagining that her pride in her sister made it bitter to realise that the possibility was remote, beautiful though Celia was, said no more.

"Well, then, to be practical," she replied, "what you have told me makes me feel that the proposal I have to lay before you may suit you even better than I had expected. For you cannot have Celia with you, or—afford good teaching for her until you have made a beginning yourself, and got a home ready."

"I must certainly have somewhere to bring her to," said Winifred, evasively, "and somewhere for myself, too," with a smile. "I should like to get things a little in order, as it were, so far settled, for, you see, I am old enough to decide for myself, before I tell my people at home about it. It would make my mother so much less anxious if I could tell her it *was* settled."

"But," exclaimed Hertha, rather taken aback, "your people do know what you are intending? You are not acting against their wishes?"

"Oh no, that is to say, they do know, thoroughly," said Winifred, with evident candour. "As for their *wishes*—why no, mother does not *wish* us to leave home. Mothers never do—do they? She would like us all to stay near her always, I suppose. But she *understands*, and—she is very kind."

"Kind" struck Hertha as a somewhat curious word to use of a mother, in such a case.

"She should be very proud of you both," she said, quickly, while her mind's eye pictured the overworked parson's wife reluctant to let her girls go forth to make their way, even though the relief and satisfaction of seeing them in the path of success could not but be great. "If you get on well, it cannot but be a comfort to her, I should think."

"She knows Celia has great talent, and she does think it should be cultivated," replied Winifred, and again something in her tone slightly perplexed Miss Norreys. "I don't think she feels the same about me, for you see I have no very special line. But there are quantities of *men* who have no very special line, and yet do well, and are of use in their generation. So why not women!"

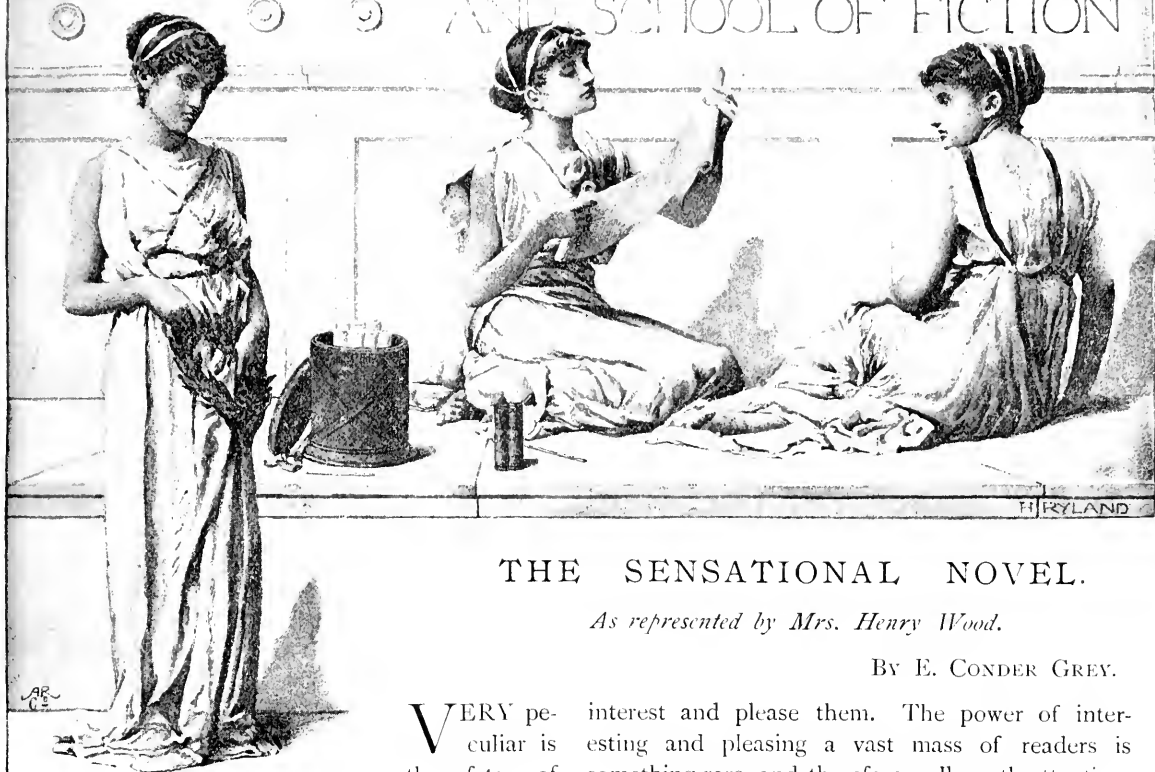
And she looked up enquiringly at Hertha.

"Why not? There is no reason against it when the motives are sound and good, as in your case I think they must be," Miss Norreys replied, half hoping that this would lead to further confidence. But Winifred did not speak, so she went on: "The chance I have to tell you of really *is* a chance, though it may not sound very splendid. Through an old friend of mine, Mr. Montague, you can have the offer of a post in the Reasonable Aid Society, provided, of course, you can pass a certain examination. It is a very well managed Society: they try to kill two birds with one stone by engaging to do the work—charitable work of course—girls like yourself, who—who feel they should do something for themselves, to be independent, and, in many cases, with the hope of eventually helping their friends."

(To be continued.)



# THE ATALANTA SCHOLARSHIP AND SCHOOL OF FICTION



## THE SENSATIONAL NOVEL.

*As represented by Mrs. Henry Wood.*

BY E. CONDER GREY.

VERY peculiar is the fate of authors. One with all the qualities that we should fancy make for wide popularity—knowledge of character, piquant wit, and pleasant style—is yet relegated to the select few. Some lack of broad sympathy, or defect of construction or failure firmly to grip a certain something in the rough fibre of humanity, stands in the way, and no effort or puff or push can move the work into view of the great mass; another who may be defective in what critics regard as essential to a great or even successful work of fiction, may yet lay hold on the elements which the other has missed, and command an audience such as it is the desire of everyone who writes popular literature to gain. Mrs. Henry Wood belongs to this class; her novels have, in point of sale, eclipsed all other novels written by women, and it is doubtful if more than two men writers have surpassed her in this regard. It is surely, then, worth while to enquire for a moment into the possible reasons for this great success. People don't buy what they don't like—nothing will make the great crowd read a book that does not take their fancy—in a word, that does not

interest and please them. The power of interesting and pleasing a vast mass of readers is something rare, and therefore well worth attention, whatever defects there may be in details.

Mrs. Henry Wood wrote many novels—about fifty altogether—and they were not all precisely of one type; very far from it—she wrote three sets of “Johnny Ludlow” papers, each in three volumes, which are in the main pure studies of character, with only enough of incident and situation to give the necessary sense of movement. These were such works as, according to the critics, Mrs. Henry Wood should not have been able to write, since they denied to her any power in character-drawing, and were often very hard upon her style. But that she could draw character, if her style was sometimes careless and clumsy, is amply proved by her portraits of English boys, of which she has given specimens in many of her stories, notably in “Lady Grace,” where Cyras and Charley Baumgarten are painted to the life. Cyras, the elder boy, as will be remembered, in every way bullies and domineers little Charley, but he will allow no other boy to do so, and tenderly soothes and cheers him after having bravely defended him against other boys. These boy studies might

indeed have led any careful critic exactly to expect such a work as "Johnny Ludlow," which was at first anonymously published; and yet no critic even guessed at the authorship of the work.

But Mrs. Henry Wood's great fame was gained by the sensational novel—the novel in which incident, surprise, mystery, and the unexpected—accident, poisoning and secret crime—hold sway. Now, this sort of invention, which is concerned in the spinning of plot in fiction of this kind, is not in itself of a high grade, and the very faculty attained in this may soon prove ruinous to the exercise of any higher faculty. Mrs. Henry Wood's peculiarity, and the reason why she has so well kept her place with the public is that, unlike most of the writers who have indulged themselves in the production of sensational plots, she always took care to involve in her conceptions a few characters, the counterparts of which she had actually known, which were developed with such a sense of reality and *inevitableness*, and their development made so dependent on the movement of the plot, and kept in such close contact with it, that you have a very intimate mixture indeed of the real and everyday, with the merely imaginative and exceptional. It is in this combination, maintained with so much persistency and care, that Mrs. Wood's real power lies, and here we have the explanation of her hold on the wide public. It was not alone that she wrote sensational novels; it was because she had rare art in working the reality of everyday life and character and incident into the texture of the sensational plot, that she has gained and has kept her place.

Another point in her favour was that, at a time when the sensational novel had just come into vogue and was being produced by various very powerful hands, she, unlike them in their general tendency, used sensational machinery and incident for moral ends. No one can deny the general purpose which animates her work—the desire to show how foolish all crime is, how utterly weak and self-injuring all vice really is, and how much wrong a man does to himself in all secret enjoyments and indulgences. "Be sure your sin will find you out" might almost be her motto. The moral element by itself would have done little, however, to have gained her her position—it would indeed have been against her, as all direct moralising is: she took care to wrap up her moral lesson in

the action of the story, and to leave the reader to draw the conclusion from it for himself and herself.

One of the true tests of success in fiction is the sense of sympathy and toleration, the power of impressing the reader with a complete belief in the reality of the characters, as though they had been lived with, observed, patiently "put up with," and had sometimes amused, sometimes vexed and irritated. The result is that they affect you precisely as the author wishes you to feel that they affected her. This was what gave the sense of reality to the novels of Jane Austen and Miss Ferrier; so it does, up to a certain degree, to the novels of Mrs. Wood, only, as has been said, she associates all this with another order of agencies, skilfully used even to aid the other. Her plots are well thought out, no loose threads appear: incidents, mysteries, sensational surprises succeed each other, but there is no violation done to the main lines of the character as at first laid in. This is the great reason of her success. The characters are caught up, involved in the most unexpected circumstances of mystery and crime, but each retains much of the dominant characteristic, only modified, it may be, as to its energy and the manner of its expression. Though this is true of "East Lynne," it is much more true of some of the other novels. In "Lady Adelaide," for instance, it is powerfully felt: there we have a study of the effects of the burden of a secret on the human heart: so, too, in "Red Court Farm" and "The Master of Greylands," where evil traffic persisted in leaves its effects not only on those innocently involved in its coils, but also on those who, having once committed themselves to an unworthy course of action, found to their cost that the ends they had proposed were defeated by the very means taken to secure them. And yet, in midst of all this, look at the group of *real* characters who move about. The tomboy, Flora, who sets the house by the ears; Ethel Reeve, so sweet, patient and confiding, and Mr. North, who courts Ethel in the most natural manner; Mr. and Mrs. Bent at the inn; Miss Castlemaine, the head of the Grey Sisters, who refuses to listen to the man who, in earlier years, had allowed his father's authority to separate him from her. The very absence of conscious and obtrusive elaboration is in favour of the general impression.

We find much of the same power in "George

"Canterbury's Will." The leading characters are all real, life-like—what is more, their character is their fate. Caroline, who rejects the honest, frank, and manly Thomas Kage for the sake of George Canterbury's money, and who, when the time comes, fancies she has only to throw herself at Thomas Kage to be accepted, finds that she has sacrificed the substance for the shadow after all; and gets her master in the designing and unscrupulous scoundrel, Captain Dawkes. We see Dawkes' fate prefigured too in the first glance we have of him. And the relief is found in the half-blind devotion to him of his sister Keziah, and the quick insight and brusque ways of old, crusty, half-deaf, good-hearted, Mrs. Garston. Nor can we forget Lady Kage and her peculiarities, nor Belle Annesley and her fate, which imparts a pathetic colour to the latter part of the story. In "Dene Hollow," too, where perhaps the mysterious and sensational are as prominent as in any of the stories, we have proofs of the same power in the portraits of Tom Clanwaring and his cousin Geoffrey, in Maria Owen, and in at least one other character. In "Verner's Pride," with its closely constructed plot and sensational episodes, too, we have some good studies of character. Lionel Verner himself is a true gentleman, who acts under some fatal impulse in allowing himself to fall under the wiles of a designing syren and in rejecting a true lover, who, however, proves herself to be of the truest stamp, and did in the end, find her reward; and Jan, that genuine but awkward medical practitioner, who was despised by his family, but who, in a crisis, could do such self-denying things without any thought that they deserved the least notice or claimed any commendation; and finally surprised them all by making such a marriage—"poor, despised, ill-dressed Jan"—as brought honour to the house.

We often think of that late pronouncement of Goethe, after so much of thought, experience, and effort—that there was no such thing as creation in the sense of something spun out of the fancy and inventive faculties, but that all true creation was representation of something once known and lovingly remembered and reproduced. Well, the sensational novel is, of all novels, the one that, *by its initiative*, tends to become the very kind of art which Goethe here condemns. How, then, can it be redeemed from the ruin of its own excess? We

venture to think precisely by the road which was taken by Mrs. Henry Wood. We do not say that she was always successful in observing the exact limits to which sensation, mystery, and mere invention may go, but she succeeded where she did because she attended to life and painted so largely what she knew. The attention to truth in the presentation and development of the character was the saving element. Life itself, it is often said, is stranger than fiction; but the strangeness must be associated with elements that are common, that commend themselves to us by their utter realism, their familiarity of feature and outline. All else is up in the air: it has no root in the earth, and will lay no hold on the ordinary sympathies—more especially the educated sympathies.

If, then, you would write a successful sensational novel, do all that in you lies to perfect your plot, leave no loose threads there, but be careful not to press your mysteries and surprises to such a point that there is no room for natural character and the play of those ordinary motives and interests which have perennial attraction as of healthy life itself. It is in the subordination of the one to the other, and the helping of the one by the other, that the great art lies—while you find that which thrills and surprises, and sets all the pulses beating, you must not forget the demand for real flesh and blood, for a touch of the human hand, for a tone of the natural human voice in the utterance of common thought, sentiment, and experience. Wilkie Collins, with all his power, failed here. Miss Gwilt is not in nature; only in his head. A sensational novel succeeds, after all, not because of its sensationalism alone, but because of the cunning way in which sensational elements are made to give relief, effect and emphasis to that which by itself might be made to appear all too prosaic, common, and everyday. Sensationalism is only a means by which the platform may be heightened to catch exceptional lights and shades, but the deepest demand in the human heart is for contact with real men and women; and the more real the men and women you place on your elevated platform, the more success you will have, the more lasting will your work be. "Nothing," said a grand old English divine, "stands single or separate, but one thing is set over against another, and you can only see them truly by seeing one in the light of the other."

## ATALANTA SCHOLARSHIP AND READING UNION.

Describe a first quarrel after marriage between husband and wife. Reply-Papers to be sent in on or before the 25th of the month, and not to exceed 500 words.

### ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (JUNE).

#### I.

1. Thomson's Castle of Indolence. 2. The office of Court Poet to the Caliph of Arabia.

#### II.

1. Armour covering the neck; a tame male hawk; full of streaks; a knot: well-sinewed arms. 2. The Faery Queen.

Shelley.

#### III.

#### IV.

Mrs. Hemans, Charles Dibdin, Lady Nairne, David Garrick, Charles Dickens.

#### V.

1. By Matthew Arnold to Shakespeare. 2. The Sonnet.

#### VI.

1. The vanished home of the Aylmers. 2. Aylmer's field by Lord Tennyson.

#### VII.

1. John Gilpin. 2. A linen draper of Paternoster Row, named Beyer, who died in 1791, at the age of nearly a hundred years.

#### VIII.

1. Books. 2. The Library, by George Crabbe.

### SEARCH QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

#### I.

In what poems are found the following characters?—*Watt Tynlinn, Sir David of the Mount, Philip of Northam.*

#### II.

1. Of whom is this a description?—"She was of the tallest of women, and at her then age of six-and-twenty—for six-and-twenty she was, though she vows she was only nineteen—in the prime and fulness of her beauty."

2. Give work and author.

#### III.

1. Who uses these words?—

O, sir, your presence is too bold and peremptory,  
And majesty might never yet endure  
The moody frontier of a servant brow.

2. Give author.

#### IV.

Give source of following quotations:—

So vanish friendships only made in wine.

Like summer tempest came her tears.

The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts  
Among the palms and ferns and precipices.

#### V.

Who were Bernardo Cennini, Francesco Fifelfo, Francesco Granacci?

#### VI.

1. Give sources of following quotations:—

The night is chill, the cloud is grey:  
'Tis a month before the month of May,  
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

When youth his faery reign began,  
Ere sorrow had proclaimed me man.

And now 'twas like all instruments,  
Now like a lonely flute;  
And now it is an angel's song,  
That makes the heavens be mute.

3. By whom are they written?

#### VII.

1. What do the italicised words refer to in this quotation?

Still had *she* gazed; but midst the tide  
*Two angel forms* were seen to glide,  
The Genii of the stream.

2. Give poem and author.

#### VIII.

Whence is the following couplet taken?—

For this contained the *deer alive*  
And not the *deer deceased*!





*Engraved by the Art Reproduction Co.*

*Reginald Arthur, 1894.*

THE SACRIFICE OF IPHIGENIA.

SIR  
Robert's



Fortune.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

CHAPTER XLI.

IT was a very little, homely lodging in which Lily was—the little parlour of an old-fashioned poor little house, intended at its best to receive an Edinburgh lawyer's clerk or perhaps a poor minister or teacher on his promotion. Ronald had never seen his wife in such surroundings. He gave a cry of surprise and dismay as he pushed open the door. How often had she said that she would share any poverty with him—and yet it hurt him to see her here, out of her natural sphere, like a princess banished into a sordid world of privation and ugliness. At the sound of his voice Lily sprang up from the slippery black haircloth sofa on which she had been reposing. He thought at first it was to meet him as of old with open arms and heart to heart—but of this she showed no sign, nor even when he rushed forward to take her into his arms did she make any movement. She had seated herself on the sofa again, drawing back, in an attitude of repulsion which could not be mistaken. “Lily!” he cried, “Lily! Is this the way you receive me? Have you nothing to say to me?”

“Oh, yes—I have a great deal to say to you. Give Mr. Lumsden a chair, Beenie. It is as I thought, you were going out to dinner,” said Lily, with a gleam of exasperation at the sight of his evening dress, which was of course wholly un-

reasonable. “Why should you have broken your engagement for me?”

“You know well I would break any engagement for you,” he said. “You must know all that I have suffered during the past two months, unable to see you, even to hear of you—and not a word, not a word from yourself all that time.”

“What hindered you coming to see me?” she asked. “What prevented you? If I had died, as seemed likely, it could have done you no harm in the world—for with me every hope of Uncle Robert's money, which is what has been my destruction, would have fallen to the ground.”

“Lily, you never will understand. I did go to Kinloch-Rugas. I was once under your windows, but got no satisfaction. A man has to be silent and endure where a woman cries out. I did what I could to—”

“That is enough,” said Lily, waving her hand. “Between you and me there need be no more talking. I sent for you for one thing, to ask you one question—where is my baby? You took him out of my arms—bring him back again to me, and then there may be ground to speak.”

“He is my baby as well as yours, Lily. I have the responsibility of the family. I did what I felt to be best both for him and you.”

“What was best?” she cried. “Are you a god to judge what is best? But I will not argue with you. Give me my baby back. His mother's

arms, that is his natural place. Give me back my child—and then, perhaps, I may hear you speak.”

He had thought this matter over as he came along with the rapidity of highly stimulated thought, and a sudden great necessity for decision: he had thought of it often before, looking at the subject from every point of view. To give her back the baby was to ruin everything for which he had fought. He had not deprived himself of the company of a wife he loved, he said to himself, for a small motive: not for nothing had he encountered all the difficulties of the position in the past, and all her reproaches, tacit and expressed. Her very look at him had often been very hard to bear—and yet he paused now before making his last stroke. Once more, like lightning, the question passed through his mind, what other way was there? Was there any other way in which her mind could be satisfied and her foolish search made an end of? Could he in any other way secure her return to her home, and the carrying out to the end of his scheme? But on the other hand would she ever forgive him for what he must now do? He had not more than a moment to carry on that controversy, to make his final decision. And she was looking at him all the time: Lily's eyes which so often had smiled upon him—so often followed him with tenderness and met him with the sudden flash of love and delight—were fixed upon him steadily now, shaded by curved brows, regarding him sternly without indulgence, without wavering or softening. He was no longer to Lily covered with the glamour of love. She saw him as he was, nay, worse than he was, with a look that took no account of his real feeling towards herself or of what was in fact a perverted desire to do the best, as he saw it, for her as well as for himself. Would these eyes ever soften, whatever he might do or say? Would she ever forgive him even now?

“Lily,” he said, with an effort, overcoming the dryness of his throat, trying still to gain a little time. “I am your husband, I am your natural head and guide, it is my part to judge what is wisest, what is the best thing for you. I am older than you, I am more experienced in the world. I know what can be done, and what cannot be done. Whatever you may wish and whatever you may say, it is for me to judge what is the best.”

It is not often that a woman hears an un-

compromising statement of this kind with patience, and Lily was little likely to have done so in her natural condition of mind—but at present she had no thought but one. “I have told you,” she cried, “that you can speak after, and that I will hear. But in the meantime bring me back my little baby. I ask nothing but that, I've no mind for reasoning now. Give me back my baby, my little bairn—that's all I am asking—My baby, my baby! Ronald, if ever in your life you had a kind thought of me, a thought that was not all interest and money: and for the love of God if ever you knew that: give me back my baby! and then,” she cried with a gasp—“then we can talk.”

His mind was made up now—there was nothing else for it. His face assumed an air of the deepest gravity—that was not difficult, for indeed his situation was grave enough. He put out his hand and laid it upon hers for a moment. “Lily,” he said, “I've been endeavouring to put off this blow. It was perhaps foolish, but I thought you would feel it less, were you kept in ignorance, than if all your hopes were cut off. Fain, fain, would I bring back your baby and lay him in your arms again. You think I am a harsh man with no softness for a mother and a child—but you are mistaken, Lily. All that I am worth in this world I would give to bring him back. But there is but one hand that could do that.”

She raised herself up with a start, flinging off his hand which again had touched hers. “What do you mean? What do you mean?” she cried, with wild staring eyes—eyes that seemed to be bursting from her head. She had been leaning back on the hard sofa in her weakness. Now she sat upright, her hands raised before her as if to push off some dreadful fate.

“You know what I mean, Lily,” he said, looking at her with a determined steadiness of gaze. “What is the life of an infant like that? It is like a new-lighted candle that every breath can blow out. Oh! blame me, blame me, I will not say a word. Tell me it was the night journey, the plunge into the cold, after the warm bosom of his mother. I thought it was the only thing I could do, but I will not say a word if you tell me I was to blame. Anyhow, whosever blame it was, the baby, poor little thing—

“You mean he is dead,” said Lily, with a great cry.



He thought she had fainted: they all were in the way of thinking she had fainted when all her life went from her, except pain, which is the strongest life of all. Everything was black before Lily's eyes—her heart leaped with a wild movement and then seemed to die and become still in her breast, her lips dropped apart as if the last breath had passed there with that cry. Ronald thought she had fainted for the first moment and then he thought she had died. He sprang up with anguish in his heart: he had done it, braving all the risks, knowing her weakness—yet Beenie rushing in at the sound of Lily's cry, with all her battery of remedies, forgave him whatever he might have done at the sight of his face. "I have killed her. I have killed her," he cried, "it is my fault!"

"Oh, Sir—you should mind how weak she is," cried Beenie, bringing forth her essences, her salts, her aromatic vinegar. Their words came faintly to Lily's brain. She struggled up again from the sofa on which she had fallen back, beating the air with her hands as if to find and clutch at something that would give her strength. "My baby is dead," she cried, stumbling over the words. "My baby, my baby is dead—my baby is dead." It seemed as if the wail had become mechanical in the completeness of her downfall and misery, body and soul.

"Oh, sir!" cried Beenie again. She looked at him once more with another light in her eyes. She was but a simple woman, but to such there comes at times a kind of divination. But Ronald's look was fixed upon Lily, his eyes were touched with moisture, the deepest pain was in his face. Could it be that a man could look like that and yet lie?

"Say nothing to her," she cried, almost with authority, "let her get her breath: but tell you me—sir, when was it that this came about? I heard you tell her to blame you if she pleased. What for were you to blame? Tell me that I may explain after. Mr. Lumsden, she has a right to ken. When did it happen and what was the cause? For all so little as a bairn is, it's no without a cause when the darlings die."

"You take too much upon you, Beenie," he said. "You have no right to demand explanations. And yet, why should not I give them?" he said, with a tone of resignation. "I fear the poor little thing never got the better of that night

journey. What could I do? I could not stay there to face Sir Robert on his first arrival. I could not leave Lily to bear the brunt. I had but little time to think, but what was there else to do? I felt even that to snatch him away at a stroke would be better for her than a lingering parting with him, and the anticipation of it. There was every cause. Beenie—you're a reasonable woman."

"I will not say, sir," said Beenie, "that it was without reason: me and Katrin have said as much as that between ourselves—seeing a' that had gone before."

"Seeing all that had gone before," Ronald repeated with readiness. "But providence," he added, "turns all our wisest plans sometimes to nought. I know nothing about children——"

"But Marg'ret kent weel about children!"

"Yes—she was perhaps the more to blame—if anyone is to blame: anyhow the poor little thing—I can't explain it—you should see her, she would tell you—caught cold or something. How could I send you word when *she* was so ill? I would have kept it from her now, at least, till she was stronger and better able to bear it."

"It would maybe have been better," Beenie said, with a brevity that surprised Ronald and made him slightly uneasy. The woman did not break forth into lamentations, as he had expected, but that might be for Lily's sake, who, lying back again upon the white pillow which Beenie had placed behind her head, with the effect of making her almost transparent countenance, with its faint but deepened lines, look more fragile than ever—was coming gradually to herself. Tears were slowly welling forth under her closed eyelids, but she was very still. Whether she was listening or whether she was absorbed in her own sorrow and careless of what was going on, he could not tell. Anyhow, it was a relief to him that she was silent, and that the woman who was her closest attendant and confidant was so easily satisfied. He began to question her anxiously as to where Lily should go for her convalescence now that her object in coming there was so sadly ended. Portobello, Bridge of Allan, wherever it was, he would go at once and look for rooms. He would come when she was settled and spend as much time as possible with her. He took the whole matter at once into his own hands. And it was with a sensation of relief that he concluded after all this was said that he

could now go away. "You will do well to get her to bed and give her a sleeping draught if you have one," he said, bending over Lily with a most anxious and tender countenance as she lay, still with her eyes closed, against the pillow. It was not how he had expected her to take this dreadful news which he had brought: he had expected a passion of grief, almost raving: he had expected violent weeping, a storm of lamentation. He had on the contrary got through very easily—the tears even had ceased to hang upon Lily's closed eyelids. He bent down over her and kissed her tenderly on the forehead. She shrank from the touch indeed, but yet he felt that he must expect so much as that.

"There is but one thing, sir," said Beenie, "the woman Marg'ret—that does not seem to me to be such a grand nurse as we heard she was—you say we should see her and she would tell us a'. And that is just what I'm wanting, to see her—if you could tell me where to find her."

"I tell you! how should I know?" he said. "She will be in the same place where we found her before, I suppose."

"No, sir, she is not there."

"Then she will have gone off to nurse somebody else—that's her way of living, isn't it? No, I can tell you nothing about her. You may suppose the sight of her was not very pleasant to me—after—But she is a well known person. You will find no difficulty in finding her out."

"If that's your real opinion, Mr. Lumsden—"

"Of course it is my opinion. I will take a run to the Bridge of Allan to-morrow, and in the evening I will bring you word."

With this, and with careful steps not to disturb Lily, but yet with an uneasy soul and no certainty that he had succeeded in his bold stroke, Lumsden went away, Beenie respectfully accompanying him to the door. But when it was closed upon him, Beenie, though no lightfooted girl, flew up the stairs and rushing into the room with her hands outstretched, was met by Lily, who fell upon her maid's shoulder, both of them saying together, "It is not true: it's no true!"

"The Lord forgive him," said Beenie. "And oh, I hope you'll be able to do it—but no me! I'm not a good woman—I'm just a wild Highlander: and I could have put a pistol to his head as he stood there!"

"I can forgive him easier," said Lily, with the

tears now coming freely, "than if it had been true. Oh, Beenie! if it had been true!"

"Whisht, whisht my darling leddy: but no, my dear, just greet your fill. Eh, mem, how little a man kens! they're so grand with their wisdom, and never to think that a woman would send a scart of a pen whatever to let us ken the dear lamb was well. I've often heard the ministers say that the Deevil's no half as clever as he seems, and now I believe it this day. But you'll just go to your bed and I'll give you the draught, as he said—for this has been an awfu' day."

"Yes, I'll go—to be strong for to-morrow," said Lily, and then she turned back and caught Beenie again, throwing her arms round her. "But first," she cried, "we'll give God thanks on our bended knees, that my baby is safe—Oh, if it had been true!"

They both felt the baby's life to be more certain and more assured because his father had sworn he was dead, and they knew that was not true.

Next morning, they were both up betimes and had changed their lodging early, going not to Portobello nor to the Bridge of Allan, but to a village on the seaside, very obscure and little thought of, where, late as the season was, they could still spend a week or two without being remarked: and when she had settled her mistress there, Beenie went back to Edinburgh to search again and again through every corner that could be thought of, where Marg'ret might be heard of—but in vain. They went again next day, and every day, together—and I think traversed Edinburgh almost street by street, on a quest so hopeless that both had given it up in their heart before either breathed a word of their despair. Then they did what seemed even to Lily (and still more to Beenie) a most terrible and unparalleled thing to do, and to which she had great difficulty in bringing her mind. This was to apply to the police on the subject—what we should call putting it into the hands of the detectives. Perhaps even now there are innocent persons to whom the idea of "sending the police after" an innocent wanderer, still seems a dreadful thing to do. And these were days in which the idea of the detective was little developed and still less understood. They are not always still the most successful of functionaries, but they have at least become heroes of the popular imagination, and a certain class of

fiction is full of the wonderful deeds they have succeeded in doing, when all things were arranged to their hand. I do not know that there was a single individual of the order at that time in Edinburgh under the present title and conditions—but the thing must have existed more or less always: and when, with many hesitations and much trouble of mind, Lily made her appeal to the ingenuity of the police service to find the missing woman, it was with a little flutter of hope that she saw Margaret Bland's name and description taken down. Beenie would not even be present when this was done. She lifted up her testimony declaring that nothing would induce her to send the police after a decent honest woman that had never done anybody any harm. "Oh, mem, you may say what you like," Beenie cried. "She has had no ill intention. Send the pollisman after Anither if you will. It wasna her contrivancy, it wasna her contrivancy. I would sooner die myself than harry a woman to her ruin and take away her good name!" This had been the peroration with which Beenie had broken away, slamming the door in the face of the official who came to take Miss Ramsay's orders. Lily was very unhappy and deeply depressed. She had no one to stand by her. "It is for no harm. You will understand she is to come to no harm. Her address only, that is all I want," she cried. "We'll putt it," said the man, writing down his notes in his little book, "that it will be something to her advantage. That or a creeminal chairge is the only way of dealing with yon kind of folk."

"Yes, yes—let it be something to her advantage," Lily cried. "And it will," she said, "it will! it will be more to her advantage than anything she has ever known. You will take care that she is not frightened, not harmed in any way, not in any way!"

"How should it harm an innocent person—if this person is an innocent person?" the functionary said: and left Lily trembling for what she had done, and unable to bear the eye of Beenie, who would scarcely for a whole day after forgive her mistress. They themselves lived in terror of being found, perhaps, in their turn, hunted down by the pollis, Beenie cried—"for if you can do it for her, mem, what for no him that has nae scruples, for you?" Lily in her heart trembled too at this thought. It seemed to her that if such means

were set in action against herself she would die of misery and shame.

Ten days later she returned to Dalrugas, a little stronger, for her youth and vigour and the distraction of her thoughts, even though so painfully, from all preoccupation with herself, had given her elastic vitality its chance of recovery: but a changed and saddened woman, never again to be the Lily of the past. Her husband had not sought her, at least had not found her, nor had she wished him to do so—but yet that he should not have penetrated so very easy a mystery, seemed to prove to her that he had not wished to do so, and despite of all that had come and gone, that was a very different matter. Lily's heart was as heavy as a woman's heart could be as she went home. The whole secret of her existence, the mystery in which she had been wrapt, which she had felt to be so guilty a secret, and a mystery so oppressive, seemed now to be about to melt away, leaving her for her life long, a false and empty husk of being, an appearance and no reality. All this tremendous wave of existence seemed to have passed over her head and to be gone—leaving her, as she was, Lily Ramsay, her uncle's companion, the daughter of the desolate house, and no more, neither wife nor mother, nothing but a false pretence, a pitiful ghost—the fictitious image of something that she was not, and never again could be.

## CHAPTER XLII.

IT was not without much thought that Lumsden decided to leave his wife unmolested when she fled from him. It did not cost him much trouble to discover where she had gone—and he watched her proceedings and those of Beenie carefully, and had little difficulty in discovering what their object was. But he had foreseen all that and taken his precautions, and he had no doubt as to the result. With Lily's absolute inexperience, and the few facilities which existed at that period, a very simple amount of care would have been enough to baffle her. But he had taken a great deal of care. Margaret Bland and her charge were out of the reach of any researches made in Scotland, and his mind was quite easy as to the chances of further investigation—for Scotland was very much more separated from the rest of the world in those days

than it is now. I do not say that it did not cost him a pang to know that Lily herself was within reach and to refrain from seeing her—from saying a word further to excuse or explain—and from making at least an endeavour to recover her confidence. But he had gone too far now for excuses and expedients, and he felt that it was wiser to refrain from everything of the kind until the moment came when, in the course of nature, he would be liberated from all restrictions and be able to go to her and claim her freely, without fear of interference. If he could do so, bringing a great joy and surprise in his hand, he felt that he was more likely to be received and forgiven than if he were able only to establish a reconciliation upon the old basis of concealment and clandestine meetings, which now, indeed, would be impossible. He thought that absence would draw her heart towards him, and that in the silence she would make his excuses to herself better than he could do: and what would not a man merit, who would bring back to a mother—who had mourned for him as dead—her living child? He said over to himself, being a man of literary taste, some verses of Southey's, who was more thought of then as a poet than now—

"When the fond mother meets on high  
The babe she lost in infancy,"—

Would not all be forgiven for the sake of that? But then came in the question, Had they believed him? Had they not believed him? Had there been some channel of which he knew nothing by which they had procured information in respect to the child? This was the one doubtful matter which would be enough to crush all his most careful schemes. But he could not see how it was possible they could have obtained any information. That Margaret Bland should have written did not occur to him. Persons of her class did not write letters daily then as they do now: and he thought he had secured her devotion wholly to himself and made it quite clear to her that for his wife's sake this was the only thing that could be done. Margaret had understood him completely. She was a person of superior intelligence. She was an admirable nurse and devoted to the baby. But she was quite unaware at first that the arrangement made with her was unknown to Lily, nor had she known that in writing to Robina she had transgressed her con-

tract with the child's father. It was her duty to be silent now, she was informed, in order to avoid all danger of a correspondence that might be discovered: but nothing even now had been said to Margaret which could have made her feel herself in the wrong, or led her to confess what she had done. Thus the one thing which would have made him see how fatally he had risked all his possibilities was concealed from Lumsden. He could still honestly—or almost honestly—persuade himself that, though what he had done might be cruel for the moment, it was, in reality, the best thing for Lily. Nothing else would have satisfied her, nothing less. She would never have had a moment's peace had she understood that her child might be found. She would have thought nothing of any sacrifice involved. Her inheritance would have been of no value to her, in comparison with the possession of her baby. She was capable of making everything known to her uncle at any moment if by this means she could have secured the child. He had not ceased to love her nor to entertain for her the admiration, mingled with indulgence, which make a young woman's faults almost more attractive than her virtues to her lover. It would be like Lily to do all that—it was like Lily to give him all that trouble about the house which he never intended to get for her, but which it cost him so many fictions, so much exercise of ingenuity to satisfy her about. There were very pardonable points in that foolishness. The desire to be with him, to identify her life altogether with his, was sweet: he loved her the better for it, though, as the wiser of the two, he knew that it was impracticable, and that it must be firmly, but gently, denied to her. And to desire to have her baby was very natural and very sweet too. What prettier thing could there be than a young mother with her child? But there were more serious things in the world than those indulgences of natural affection, which are in themselves so blameless and so sweet: and this, in her own best interests, he, her husband, her natural head and guide, was forced to deny her too.

I do not think that Lily was aware of the tenor of these reasonings. She made very little allowance for her husband—at no time had she been disposed to allow that in these matters, which were of such great importance in her life—

he knew best. He had deceived her first of all, and then he had made her a reluctant accomplice in deceiving others. Nature, truth, honour, honesty had all been from the beginning on her side, and she had thought Ronald as little wise as he was right in setting them all at defiance for the preservation of a secret which ought never to have been made a secret at all. She had endured it all when there was only herself in question, but from the moment in which there was hope of the baby, Lily had felt with a leap of the heart that here was the solution of the problem, and that everything must now be made open to the light of day. It may be supposed that when, after all this dreadful episode, she returned alone, like, yet so unlike, the Lily Ramsay who was sent to Dalrugas two years before into banishment with Robina, her maid—the whole matter was turned over and over in her mind with all those dreadful visions of past chances, steps which, if taken, might have changed everything, which are the stings of such a review. To Lily, as she pondered, there seemed so many things she might have done. She might have resisted the marriage first of all. She might have refused to be married in secrecy, in a corner—the very minister, she had always felt sure, though he had been kind, disapproving of her all the time: but then (she excused herself) she had not foreseen that the marriage was to be kept a secret: it was only, she had understood, an expedient to secure quietness and speed without preliminaries that would have called the attention of the whole parish. And then when she followed her own story to that time after Whitsunday, when she had expected her husband to secure the house which could not, he swore, be obtained till the term, Lily now saw that she should have taken the matter into her own hand, that she should have permitted no more playing with the question, that, whether he liked it or not, she should have insisted on having some home and shelter of her own. Especially before the birth of her baby should she have insisted upon this. She clasped her hands with impatience and a sense of bitter failure as she thought it all over. She ought not to have allowed herself to be silenced or hindered. Her child should have been born in her own house, where he could have been welcomed and rejoiced over, not hidden away. She cried out in her solitude with that clasp of her hands, that it

was all her fault, her own fault, that she was responsible for the child above all, and that it was she who should have done this, had not only her husband, but all the powers of the earth gone against it. Then Lily reflected with the impulse of self-defence, that she had no money, and did not know how to get any, and that it would have been hard, very hard for her, without her present enlightenment, to have gone against Ronald, to have flown in his face and thwarted him so completely in a matter upon which he had so firmly made up his mind. Oh, what a difference there was between the Lily of that time—hesitating, miserable to yield and yet unable to resist, not knowing how to take a great step on her own authority, to oppose her husband and all the lesser chain of circumstances, the unconscious influence even of the women who held her with a softer bond of watchfulness and affection—and this Lily now, braced to any effort, having withdrawn and separated herself from him and from every other restraint of influence, as she thought, standing alone against all the world, deeply disenchanted, and considering every pretence of love and happiness as false and deceitful. Had it been now, how little would she have hesitated? But was not this the bitterness of life, that it was then only she could have acted effectually, and not now?

She settled down to the winter at Dalrugas with these thoughts. She was Miss Ramsay, the daughter and the mistress of the house. She did not know and did not care what was thought of her in the countryside. If stories were told of the gentleman who had come so often from Edinburgh but now came no longer, Lily heard none of them. Some faltering questions from Helen Blythe, who, instinctively, though she did not know why, never referred to Ronald in presence of Sir Robert, were all the indications she ever had that his disappearance was commented on: and Lily did not care who spoke of Ronald, or how or where their secret might be betrayed: and this indifference delivered her from many doubts and questionings. She had no objection that anybody should tell in detail the whole thing to Sir Robert. She held her head very proudly above all terrors of being found out. She was afraid of nothing now. Everything, she thought, had happened that could happen. She was separated from her husband,

not by any formality, not by any such motive as had kept the secret hitherto, but by a great gulf fixed, which Lily felt it was impossible should ever be bridged over. He had wronged her as, surely, never woman had been wronged before, lied to her, made her herself a lie, deprived her—last and greatest wrong of all—of her child. Oh, how much time, leisure, quiet, she had to think over and over all these thoughts, to persuade herself that happiness and truth were mere words, and that nothing but falsehood flourished in this world! Gradually she sank into silence on the subject even to Beenie. Her life-history, over as it seemed at twenty-five, dropped out of knowledge as if it had never been. She received no letters. Ronald indeed continued to write at intervals for some time, addressing his letters boldly to Miss Ramsay, but she never replied to them, and by degrees they ceased. She heard nothing at all from the outside world. She heard nothing of her child. They had concluded between them, Robina and she, that if “anything happened” to the child, Margaret would be restrained by no man, but would let his mother know in any case. This was all the sustenance upon which Lily lived. Her inquiries far and near had come to nothing. The harmless detectives of the old-fashioned Edinburgh police had not succeeded in tracking the fugitive. They had no news of Margaret to send. They had never found out anything about her, except what all the world knew. By one thread, and one only, Lily clung to life, and that was her vague faith in Margaret, notwithstanding all things, that the child's life was safe as long as she made no sign.

Sir Robert found himself very comfortable in Dalrugas during that winter. He had no idea he could have been so comfortable in the old lonely place on the edge of the moor. It was wonderful how possible it was to live without amusement, nay, to feel thankful that he was no longer burdened with amusement and with the thought of what he was to do with himself and how he was to find a little distraction season after season. When a man is over seventy, the care of these things is perhaps more trouble than the advantage is worth when secured—but so long as he is in the old habitual round it is difficult to learn this. He had thought that he detested monotony, but now it appeared that he rather liked monotony—the comfort of getting up with the certainty that

he had no trouble before him, no change to think of, no decision to make—to read his newspaper, to read his book, to take his walk or his drive. Sir Robert's horses and carriages very much enlarged his sphere and modified its loneliness. A longish drive now brought him to a neighbour's house, and introduced Lily to the ladies of the county, who made explanations to her and regrets not to have made her acquaintance before. And callers became, if not numerous, yet occasional, thus adding something to the little round of Sir Robert's distractions. An old gentleman or two in the distant neighbourhood, who had known him as a boy, would come occasionally with the ladies, or a younger one, whose father had known him. And there were occasional dinner-parties, though these occurred but seldom. Sir Robert liked them all, but at bottom was more than contented when the clouds hung low and the rain or snow fell and put it out of the question that he should be disturbed at all. He liked Lily's talk best of all, or her silence, when they sat together by the fireside, where comfort and quiet reigned. He had not been such a good man in his life that he deserved any such halcyon time at its end, or to feel so virtuous, so satisfied, so peaceful as he did. But the sun shines and the rain falls alike on the just and the unjust, and he had, by good fortune, the art to take advantage of the good things which providence sent him. Lily played a game of piquette with him, “not so very badly,” he said, with happy condescension, and was in time advanced to chess: but there showed signs of beating her instructor, which made Sir Robert think chess was a little too much for his head. In moments of weakness they even came down to simple draughts, and thus got through the long evenings which the old gentleman had so much feared, but which now were the happiest part of the day.

“I am told you have been here for a long time, Miss Ramsay,” Lady Dalzell said, who was the great lady of the neighbourhood: “how was it we never knew? We are here, of course, only for a short time in the year—but long enough to have driven over to Dalrugas, had we known.”

“I have been here,” said Lily, “for two years—but how it is my neighbours have not known I cannot tell. I could scarcely send round a fiery cross to say that a small person of no great account had arrived at her uncle's house.”

"I should have thought Sir Robert would have written or made some provision. Do you really mean that you have been without a chaperon, without protection?"

"Even as you see me," said Lily, with a laugh.

"And nothing ever happened," said the great lady, "to make you feel uncomfortable?"

Did she look at Lily with some meaning in her eyes? Did she mean nothing? Who could tell? There might have been a whole world of *sous-entendus* in what Lady Dalzell said, or there might be nothing at all. Lily met her gaze with perhaps a little more directness than was necessary, but she did not change colour.

"There was no raid made upon the house," said Lily, "I never was in any danger that I know of. There was Dougal, who would have fought for me to the death—perhaps: or, at all events, till some one came to help him. And I had two women who took only too much care of me."

"Ah, it was not perils of that kind I was thinking of," said Lady Dalzell, shaking her head.

"I am sorry," said Lily, "or perhaps I should rather be glad—that I don't know what perils your ladyship was thinking of."

Then the young lady of the party, Lady Dalzell's daughter, interposed, and began to talk of the approaching Christmas and the entertainments to be given in the neighbourhood. "If we had only known, we should have had you to the ball," she said. "We had not one last new-year, but the year before: and you were here then."

"Yes, I was here then."

"It was the year of that dreadful snowstorm. How lonely it must have been for you, shut up for that long fortnight. Mamma, imagine. Miss Ramsay was here all alone the year of the snowstorm, shut up in Dalrugas—and we had our ball and all sorts of things."

"I hope Miss Ramsay had some friends or something to amuse her," said Lady Dalzell.

"I had Helen Blythe from the Manse up to tea," cried Lily, with a little burst of laughter, which did not seem out of place in the violent contrast which was thus implied, though she felt it herself almost like a confession. The two ladies looked at her strangely, she thought, and hastened to change the subject. Did they look at her strangely? Did they think of her at all? Or was it the thought of their own shortcomings in respect

to this lonely girl, who was Sir Robert's niece and heiress, which made a shade upon their brows? They invited her to the ball, which was to happen this year, with much demonstration of friendliness. Not to tire Sir Robert, she and her uncle were asked to go a day or two before this important festivity and join the home party—and Miss Dalzell conveyed to Miss Ramsay the delightful intelligence that there would be "plenty of partners." All the county and the officers from Perth, and a large party from Edinburgh: the girl spoke of all these preparations with sparkling eyes.

"Well, Lily," said Sir Robert when the visitors were gone, "this will be something for you: you will have one ball at least." He did not much relish the prospect for himself, but he was grateful, and felt that he must face it for her.

"I don't feel so much enchanted as I ought," said Lily. "Would it disappoint you much, uncle, if I wrote to say we could not go?"

"Disappoint *me*, my dear!—but you must go, for you would like it, Lily. Every girl of your age likes a ball."

"My age, Uncle Robert! Do you know I am five-and-twenty? I would rather sit alone all night and sew, though I am not very fond of sewing. Unless you want to dance and flirt and behave yourself as gentlemen of your age ought not to do, I think we'll stay at home and play piquette. I am going to no ball," cried Lily, her patience breaking down for the moment, "not now, nor ever. I—to a ball! after all these years!"

"Lily," said Sir Robert, with a disturbed look, "I have expressed my regret that you should have had such a lonely life, but it hurts me, my dear, to hear you express yourself with such bitterness about those years—there were but two of them after all."

"That is true," she said, recovering herself quickly, "but when one has a great deal of time to think, one changes one's mind about a great many things—especially balls."

"That is true, too," he said, "so long as you are not bitter about it, as I sometimes fear you are inclined to be, my dear."

"Not bitter at all," she cried, with a smile that quivered a little on her lip. She got up and stood at the window, with her back to him,

looking out upon the moor. The clouds were hanging low, almost touching the hills, the sky so heavy that it seemed to be closing down, in one deep tone of gray, upon the dumb, unresisting earth. "I hope," said Lily, "that they will get home before the snow comes down." She stood there for some time looking out upon that scene, which had seen so much. "It was the year of that dreadful snowstorm," the girl had said. And the ball to which they had asked her was on the anniversary of her wedding day.

### CHAPTER XLIII.

It did not snow that year: the weather was mild and wet. There was not the exhilaration, the mystery, the clear-breathing chill of the snow, the great gorgeous sunsets over the purple hills. But the little world was closed in with opaque walls of cloud: the sky low, as if you could almost touch it: the hills absent from the landscape, replaced by banks of watery mist, indefinite, meaning nothing: and all life shut up within the enclosure, where there was shelter to be had and warmth, if nothing else. It was thus that the anniversary of Lily's honeymoon passed by. Her mind was like the sky, covered by heavy mists, falling low, as if there was no longer earth and heaven, but only a land of darkness and of despair between: behind these mists all her existence had disappeared. Her child, perhaps, was there, her husband was there, the woman she might have been was there—so was the old Lily, the girl full of laughter and flying thoughts, full of quick resolutions and plans and infinite hope. The woman who stood by the window was a woman whom Lily scarcely knew, who did what she had to do mechanically, whether it was ordering Sir Robert's dinner or playing piquette with him, or gazing, gazing out of that window before he came downstairs. She gazed, but she looked for no one upon the distant road: her gaze meant nothing, any more than her life did. She had no hope of anything, scarcely, she thought to herself, any desire left. A ball! to go to a ball! which her uncle thought every one of her age must wish to do. *He* had been going out to dinner *that* night—most likely he was going to balls also, about the New Year time, when there were so many in Edinburgh. He could not well get out

of it, he would probably say to himself. At the New Year time! the New Year!

That season passed over, and so did many more. Miss Ramsay of Dalrugas became almost well known in the county. She went nowhere, being very much devoted, everybody said, to her old uncle, and perhaps a little bitter at being tied to him, never able to do anything to please herself: for it was only natural to suppose it would please her better to see her friends—to see the world, to have her share of the amusements that were going—than to sit over the fire with that old man. "I must say that she is goodness itself to him," Lady Dalzell said, "now, at least, whatever she may have been." These words fired the imagination of her company, who were eager to know what Miss Ramsay might have been in the past, but Lady Dalzell was very discreet, all the more that she knew nothing, and was unprovided with any story to tell. "Whatever she may have done—she is not the least what she used to be when she was a girl in Edinburgh," she said. And everybody was disposed to believe that Lady Dalzell referred to the recollections of her own youth, when she was herself a girl in Edinburgh, and Miss Ramsay of Dalrugas perhaps a little younger and something of a contemporary. There was nobody who did not add on ten years at least to Lily's age.

The little population at Dalrugas itself almost felt the same. To them, too, it seemed that ten years and more had suddenly been added to their young mistress's age. They themselves had departed to an incredible distance from her or she from them. To think how they had surrounded her with their almost protecting and familiar love, so short a time before, watching every movement, feeling every variation of feeling in her, knowing all her secrets, giving her their most zealous guardianship: and that now they should be pushed so far away—the servants of the house, to receive their orders, but all silence between them, everything that had been, ignored, not a word said. It was Katrin who felt it most, having been aware all the time that she herself had much more to do in the matter, and was a more responsible person than Beenie—who often would have been very little fitted to meet any such emergencies as had occurred—but who was now the best off, receiving from time to time a scrap of confidence perhaps,



at least, the chance of close attendance, while Katrin had to be thinking of her dinner, and of all that was wanted in the enlarged and much more troublesome household. Lily never looked at Katrin, even, as if there had been anything more intimate between them than the ordinary relations of mistress and servant. Had she forgotten how Katrin had stood by her, all she had seen, all she had known? Sometimes Katrin asked herself, with indignation and a sense of injured affection, what Lily, with more reason, asked herself too—had these scenes ever existed but in imagination, had it been all a dream? Sometimes as she came downstairs with her orders for the day, and with a full heart, swelling with disappointment after some little implied appeal to the past, of which Lily had taken no notice, Katrin had hard work to keep from crying, which would, she felt, be an eternal disgrace to her “afore thae strange women”—the maids who now took the work of the house from her shoulders, and enforced the bondage of the conventional upon her life. Katrin felt this as deeply as if she had been the most high-minded of visionaries. Now-a-days she had always to “behave herself,” always to be upon her P’s and Q’s. She could not even fly out upon Dougal, which sometimes might have been a consolation, lest these strange women should exchange looks, and say to each other how little dignified for Sir Robert’s housekeeper this person was. Dougal, indeed, in the emergency, was the only one who gave her a rough support. He would say, with a jerk of his thumb over his shoulder in the direction of the stairs: “She’s no just hersel’ the noo. Ye should ken that better than me: but ye make nae allowance. I would like to get her out some day for a ride upon the powny, and maybe she would open her heart.”

“To you!” Katrin said, with a sort of shriek, pushing him from her, the strange women for once being out of the way.

“She might do waur,” said Dougal, pushing his bonnet to his other ear. “But my faith! if I ever lay my hand on that birky frae Edinburgh—him or me shall ken the reason,” he cried, bending his shaggy brows, and swinging his clenched fist through the air.

“You’re a bonnie person to interfere in my mistress’s affairs,” Katrin cried, “your pownies and you! If she’s mair distant and mair grand

it’s just what’s becoming, and the house full of gentlemen and ladies, no to speak o’ thae strange women, that are at a person’s tails, spying every movement, day and night. For gudeness’ sake gang away and let me be quit of ye, man! If you come in on the top o’ a’ to take up ony moments’ peace I have, I will just gang clean out of the sma’ sense that’s left me—and pison ye all in your broth!” cried Katrin, with flashing eyes.

Dougal withdrew to the place in which he was most at home in the altered house, Rory’s stable, where he and his favourite rubbed their shaggy heads together in mutual consolation. Rory, too, had fallen from his high estate. Never now did he carry the young lady of the house (which, truth to tell, was not an honour he had ever appreciated much), never convey a guest to the coach or the market. Rory went to the hill for peat: he was ridden into the town, helter-skelter, by a reckless young groom, for the letters: instead of the gentleman of the stable, with the black pony under him to do all the rough work, it was he who had become, as it were, the black pony, the pony of-all-work of the establishment. Yet what things he had known! What scenes he had seen! There was a consciousness of it all, and a choking no doubt of honest merit undervalued, in his throat, too, as he rubbed his nose against Dougal’s shoulder. He had been even “further ben” than Dougal in the secrets of the life that was past.

And Lily did not console Katrin, said nothing to Robina, did not even attempt to save the pony from his hard fate. She was as hard as Fate herself, wrapped up as in robes of ice or stone, smiling as if from a pinnacle of chill unconsciousness upon all those spectators of her past existence—the conspirators who had helped out every contrivance—the accomplices. And yet it was not the rage, which sometimes silently devoured her, which separated her from her humble friends. She was angry with them as with all the world, and herself most of all. But sometimes her heart yearned, too, for a kind word, for a look from eyes which knew all that had been and was no more. But I think she dared not let it be seen, lest the flood-doors, once opened, should give forth the whole tide and could never close again.

When all this came to an end, I do not think Lily was aware how long it had been: if it had been two years or three years, I believe she

never quite knew : the dates, indeed, established the course of time, but when did she think of dates, as the monotonous seasons followed each other, day by night, and summer by winter, and meal by meal. Routine was very strong in Sir Robert's house, where every hour was measured, and every repast as punctual as clockwork, and there was nothing which happened to-day which did not happen to-morrow, and would so continue unwavering, unending, till time was over. Such a routine makes one forget that time will ever be over : it looks as if it might go on for ever, as if no breach were possible, still less any conclusion : and yet, in the course of time, the conclusion must always come at last.

One of these winters was a bad one for the old folk—something ungenial was in the air. It was not actually that the temperature was much lower than usual, but the cold lasted long, without breaks or any intervals of rest : always cold, always gray, with no gleams in the sky. The babies felt it first, and then the old people : everybody had bronchitis—for influenza was not in those days. There was coughing in every cottage, and by degrees the old fathers and mothers began to disappear. There were not enough of them to startle people in the newspapers as with any record of an epidemic, but only the old people who were ripe for falling, and wanted only a puff of wind to blow them away like the last leaves on a tree, felt that puff, and dropped noiselessly, their time being come. It began to appear of more decided importance when Mr. Blythe was known to be very ill, not in his usual quiet chronic manner, but with bronchitis too like all the rest. There had not been very much intercourse between Dalrugas and the Manse since Sir Robert's arrival. He had been eager to see the old minister, who was almost the only relic of the friends of his youth, and they had found a great deal to say to each other on the first and even on the second visit. But Sir Robert liked his visitors to come to him, and Mr. Blythe was incapable of moving from his chair, so that their intercourse gradually lessened even in the first year, and in the second came almost to nothing at all. There was an embarrassment, too, between the two old gentlemen. Mr. Blythe felt it, and would stop short even in the midst of one of his best stories, struck by some sudden suggestion,

and grow portentously grave, just where the laugh came in. Sometimes he would look round at Lily, half angry, half inquiring. He could not be at ease with his old friend when so great a secret lay between them, and though Sir Robert knew nothing about any secret nor even suspected the existence of such a thing, he yet felt also that there was something on Blythe's mind. "What is it he wants to speak to me about?" he would say to Lily. "I am certain there is something. Is it about his girl? He should be able to leave his girl pretty well off, or at least to provide for her according to her station. Does he want me to take the charge of his girl?" "Helen will want nobody to take care of her," said Lily. "Then what is it he has on his mind?" Sir Robert asked, but got no reply. Thus it was that their intercourse had been checked. And there was a cloud between Lily and Helen, who was deeply troubled in her mind by the complete disappearance of Lumsden from the scene. There were many things about him, and her friend's connection with him, that had disturbed Helen in the past. She had not known how to account for many circumstances in the story : his constant reappearance, the mystery of an intercourse which never came to anything further, yet never slackened, had troubled her sorely. She had not asked, nor wished to hear, any explanation which might be, in however small a degree, derogatory to Lily. She would rather bear the pain of doubt than the worse pain of knowing that her doubts were justified. And there were a host of minor circumstances which had added to her confusion and trouble, just before Sir Robert's arrival, when Lily had, as she thought, withdrawn from her society, and even made pretences not to see her, to Helen's astonishment and dismay. And then there came Lily's illness, and Ronald's anxious visit, and then—nothing more. A curtain falling, as it were, on the whole confused drama ; an end, which was no end. Ronald's name had never been mentioned since : he had never been seen in the country ; he had gone out of Lily's life, so far as appeared, totally without reason given or word said. And Helen had not continued to question Lily, whom she, like everybody else, found to be so much changed by her illness. There was something in the face which had been so sweet and almost child-like a little time before, which now stopped

explanation. Helen looked into it wistfully—and was silent. And thus the veil which had fallen between the two old men came down still more darkly between the other two, and the intercourse had grown less and less, until, in the cold wintry weather of this miserable season, it had almost died away.

But it was a great shock to hear, one grey, dull morning when everything seemed more miserable than ever, the sky more heavy, the frost more bitter, that the minister had died in the night. This news came to them with the letters and the early rolls for which every morning now a groom rode into Kinloch-Rugas upon the humiliated Rory. The minister dead! Sir Robert was more impressed by it than could have been imagined possible. "Old Blythe!" he said to himself, with a shock which paled his own ruddy countenance. Why should he have died? The routine of his life was as fixed and certain as that of Sir Robert himself. There seemed no necessity that it should ever be broken. He was part of the landscape like one of the hills, like the gray steeple of his church, a landmark, a thing not to be removed. Yet he was removed, and Mr. Douglas, the assistant and successor, was now minister of Kinloch-Rugas. In a little while the place which had known him so long would know him no more. Sir Robert ate very little breakfast that morning: he had himself a bad cold which he could not shake off: he got up and walked about the room, almost with excitement. "Old Blythe!" he repeated, and began to recall audibly to himself, or at least only half to Lily, the time when Old Blythe was young, as young as other folk, and a very cheery fellow and a good companion and no nonsense about him. And now he was dead! It was probably the fault of that dashed drunken doctor, who fortunately was not Sir Robert's doctor, who had let him die. Lily on her part was scarcely less moved—Dead! The man who had held so prominent a place in that dream, who had never forgotten it, in whose eyes she had read her own history, at least, so far as he knew it, the last time she met his look—with so living a question in them too, almost demanding was that secret never to be told?—ready to insist, to say—"Then I must tell it if you will not." She had read all that in his look the last time she had seen him, and in her soul had trembled. And now he was dead and could never say a word.

She had a vague sense too that she had one less now among the few people who would stand by her. But she wanted no one to stand by her—she was in no trouble. The mystery of her existence would never now be revealed.

"I think I ought to go and see Helen, uncle," she said.

"Certainly, certainly," he cried, more eager than she was. "Order the brougham at once, and be sure you take plenty of wraps. Is there anything we could send? Think, my dear—is there anything I could do? I would like—to show every respect."

He made a movement as if he would go to the escritoire in which he kept his money: for cheques were not—or at least were not for individual purposes, in these days.

"Uncle," she said, "they are not poor people—you cannot send money, they are like ourselves."

"Let me tell you," he said, with a little irritation, "that there are many families even like ourselves as you say—which the Blythes are not—who would be very thankful for a timely present at such a moment. But, however—Is there nothing you can take, no cordial, or a little of the port—or—anything?"

"Helen wants nothing, uncle—but perhaps a kind word."

"Helen! ah, that's true: the auld man's gone that would have known the good of it. Well, tell her at least that if I can be of any use to her—I always thought," he cried, with a little evident but quickly suppressed emotion "that he had something he wanted to say to me—something that was on his mind."

How little he thought what it was that the old minister had on his mind! and how well Lily knew.

Helen was very calm, almost calmer than Lily was, when they met in the old parlour where the great chair was already set against the wall. "You are not to cry, Lily: he was very clear in his mind though sore wearied in his body: he was glad at the last to get away. He said 'I've had my time here, and no a bad time either, the Lord be praised for all his mercies—and I'll maybe find a wee place to creep into, that She will have keepit for me: not a minister,' he said, oh, Lily! 'but maybe a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord.' Is that not all we could wish for, that his mind should have been like that," said Helen, with eyes

too clear for tears. She was arranging everything in her quiet way, requiring no help, quite worn out with watching, but incapable of rest until all that was needful had been done. The darkened room where so much had happened, isolated now from the common day by the shutting out of the light, seemed like a sort of funereal, monumental chamber in all its homely shabbiness—a grey and colourless vault, not for him who had gone out of it, but for the ghosts and phantoms of all that had taken place there. Lily's heart was more oppressed by the grey detachment of that room, in which her own life had been decided, than either by the serene death above or the serene sorrow by her side.

When she got back, Sir Robert, very fretful, was sitting over the fire. He was hoarse and coughing, and more impatient than she had seen him. "If it goes on like this I'll not stay here," he said, "not another week, let them say what they like. Four weeks of frost, a measured month, and as much more in that bitter sky. No. I will not stay: and, however attached you are to the place, you'll come with me, Lily. Yes, you'll come with me. We'll take up my old travelling carriage, and we'll get away to the South—if I were but free of this confounded cold."

"We must take care of you, Uncle. You must let us take care of you, and your cold will soon go."

"You think so?" he said eagerly: "I thought you would think so. I never was a man for catching cold. I never had a bronchitis in my life, that's not my danger. If that doctor man would but come—for I thought it as well to send for him?"

He looked up at her with an enquiring look. He was anxious to be approved in what he had done. "It was the only thing to do," she said, and he was as glad she thought so as if she had been the mistress of his actions.

But by the evening, Sir Robert was very ill. He fought very hard for his life. He was several years over seventy, and there did not seem much in life to retain him. But nevertheless he fought hard for it, and was very unwilling to let it go. He made several rallies from sheer strength of will, it appeared. But in the end the old soldier had to yield as we must all do. The long frost lasted, the bitter winds blew—no softening came to the weather or to Fate. Sir Robert died not long after the old minister had been laid in the grave.

It was a dreadful year for the old folk, everybody said: they fell like the leaves in October before every wind.

#### CHAPTER XLIV.

I DO not think that Lily in the least realised what had happened to her when her uncle died. She grieved for him with a very natural—not excessive—sorrow, as a daughter grieves for an old father, whose life she is aware cannot be long prolonged. He was more to her than it was to be expected he could have been. These two years of constant intercourse, and a good deal of kindness, which could scarcely be called unselfish, yet was more genuine on that very account, had brought them into real relationship with each other: and Lily, who never had known what family ties were, had come to regard the careless Uncle Robert of her youth, to whom she had been a troublesome appendage, as he was to her the representative of a quite unaffectionate authority—as a father, who indeed made many demands, but made them with a confidence and trust in her good feeling which were quite natural and quite irresistible, calling forth in her the qualities to which that appeal was made. Sir Robert had all unawares served Lily, though it was his coming which was the cause of the great catastrophe in her life. She did not blame him for that; it was inevitable: in one way or other it must have come: but she was grateful to him for having laid hands upon her, so to speak, in the failure of all things, and given her duties and a necessity for living. And now she was sorry for him, as a daughter for a father—let us say a married daughter with interests of her own—for a father who had been all that was natural to her, but no more.

She was a little dazed and confused, however, with the rapidity of the catastrophe, the week's close nursing, the fatigue, the profound feeling which death—especially with those to whom his presence is new—inevitably calls forth: and very much subdued and sorrowful in her mind, feeling the vacancy, the silence, the departure of the well-known figure, which had given a second fictitious life to this now doubly deserted place. And it did not occur to Lily to think how her own position was affected, or what change had taken

place in her life. She was not an incapable woman, whom the management of her own affairs would have frightened or over-burdened, but she never had possessed any affairs, never had the command of any money, never arranged, except as she was told, where or how she had to live. Until her uncle had given her, when she went to Edinburgh, the sum, which to her inexperience was fabulous, and which she had spent chiefly in her vain search after her child, she had never had any money at all. She did not even think of it in this new change of affairs, nor of what her future fate in that respect was to be.

This indifference was not shared by the household, or at least by those two important members of it, Katrin and Robina, who had been most attentive and careful of Sir Robert in his illness, but who, after he was dead, having little tie of any kind to the old gentleman, who had been a good enough master and no more—dropped him as much as it was possible to drop the idea of one who lay solemnly dead in the house, the centre of all its occupations still, though he could influence them no more. "What will happen now?" they said to each other, putting their heads together when the "strange women," subdued by "a death in the house," were occupied with their special businesses, and Sir Robert's man, his occupation gone, had retired to his chamber, feeling himself in want of rest and refreshment after the labours of nursing, which he had not undergone. "What will happen noo?" said Katrin. "And what will we do with her?" Beenie said, shaking her large head.

"I'll tell you," said Katrin, "the first thing that will happen. Before we ken where we are we'll hae *him* here."

"No, no," said Beenie, "no, no. I am not expecting that."

"You may expect what ye like: but that is what will happen. He will come in just as he used to do with a fib about the cauld of the Hielands, and a word about the steps that are so worn and no safe. Woman, he has the ball at his fit now. Do you no ken, when a man's wife comes into her siller, it's to him it goes. She will have everything, and well he kens that, and it's just the reason of all that has come and gone."

"He'll never daur," said Beenie, "after leaving her so long to herself, and after a' that's come and gone, as you say."

"It's none of his fault leaving her to hersel'. He has written to her and written to her, for I've seen the letters mysel': and if she has taken no notice, it is her wyte and not his. She will have a grand fortune, a' auld Sir Robert's money, and this place that is the home o' them all."

"I never thought so much of this place. She'll not bide here. Her and me will be away as soon as ever it's decent, I will assure you o' that, to seek the bairn over a' the world."

"You'll never find him," said Katrin.

"Ay, will we! Naeboddy to say her nay, and siller in her pouch, and the world before her. We'll find him if he were at its other end."

"Ye'll never find him—without the father of him," cried Katrin, becoming excited in her opposition.

"That swore he was dead!" cried Beenie, flushing too with fight and indignation, "that stood up to my face—me that kent better, and threepit that the bairn was dead. And her that was his mother sitting by, her bonnie face covered in her hands."

"Woman!" cried Katrin, "would you keep up dispeice in a house for anything a man may have said or threepit? I'm for peace whatever it costs. What is a house that's divided against itself? Scripture will tell ye that. Even if a man is an ill man, if he belongs to ye, it's better t' have him than to want him. It's mair decent. Once you've plighted him your word, ye must just pit up with him for good report or evil report. If the father's in one place and the mother's in another, how are ye to bring up a bairn? And a' just for a lie the man has told when he was in desperation, and for taking away the bairn when we couldna have keepit him, when it was as clear as daylight something had to be done. Losh! Dougal might tear the hair out o' my head, or the claes frae my back, he would be my man still."

"Seeing he is little like to do either the one thing or the other, it's easy speaking," Beenie said.

Lily did not come so far as this in her thoughts till a day or two had past, and then there came upon her, as Beenie had divined, the sudden impulse which nevertheless had been lying dormant in her mind all this time, to get up and go, at once, in pursuit of her baby. All the people she had employed, all the schemes she had tried, had come to nothing. At first her ignorant

efforts had been balked by that very ignorance itself, by not knowing what to do or whom to trust, and then by distance, and time, and agents who were not very much in earnest. To look for a great criminal, that was a thing which might waken all the natural detective qualities even before detectives were. But to look for a baby, with no glory, no notoriety, whatever might be one's success! Lily saw all this now with the wisdom that even a very little practical experience gives. But his mother—that would be a very different matter. His mother would find him wheresoever he was hidden. And, after the first day of consternation, of confusion and fatigue, this resolution flashed upon her, as it had done at times through all the miserable months that were past. She had been obliged to crush it then, but now there was no occasion to crush it any longer. She was free—no one had any right to stop her: she was necessary to nobody—bound to nobody. So she thought, rejecting vehemently in her mind the idea of her husband, who had robbed her, who had lied to her, but who should not restrain her now, let the law say what it would. Lily did not even know how much the property of her husband she was. Even in the old bad times it was only when evil days came that the women learnt this. The majority of them, let us hope, went to their graves without ever knowing it, except in a jibe, which was to the address of all women. She did not think of it. Ronald had robbed her, had lied to her, and was separated from her for ever; but that he would even now attempt to control her did not enter into Lily's mind. He was a gentleman, though these were not the acts of a gentleman. She did not fear him nor suspect him of any common offence against her. He had been guilty of these crimes—that was the only word to use for them, but to herself, Lily, he could do nothing. She had so much confidence in him still. Nor indeed (she thought at first) would he have anything to do with it. He would know nothing—she would go after her child at once, as was natural—his mother's right. And he surely would not be the man to interfere.

Then as she began to wait, to feel herself waiting, every nerve tingling and excitement rising in her veins every hour, in the enforced silence of the shadowed house, until the funeral should set her free, Lily came to life altogether, she could

not tell how, in a moment, waking as if from the past, the ice, the paralysis that had bound her. She had lived with her uncle these two years, and she had not lived at all. She had not known even what was the passage of time. Her existence had been mechanical, and all her days alike, the winter in one fashion, the summer in another. The child—the thought of the child had been a thread which kept her to life: otherwise there had been nothing. But now, when that thought of the child became active and an inspiration, her whole soul suddenly came to life again. It was as when the world has been hid by the darkness of night and we seem to stand detached, the only point of consciousness with nothing round us, till between two openings of the eyelids there comes into being again a universe that had been hidden, the sky, the soil, the household walls, all in a moment visible in that dawn which is scarcely light, which is vision, which re-creates and restores all that we knew of. To Lily there came a change like that. She closed her eyes in the wintry blackness of the night, and when she opened them everything had come back to her. It was not that she had forgotten. It was all there, all the time: but her heart had been benumbed, and darkness had covered the face of the earth. It was not the light or warmth of the sunrise that came upon her; it was that revelation of the earliest dawn that makes the hidden things visible, and fills in once more the mountains and the moors, the earth and the sky.

It was with a shock that she saw it all again. She had been wrapped in a false show, everything vanity and delusion about her—Miss Ramsay—a name that was hers no longer: but in reality she was Ronald Lumsden's wife, the mother of a child, a woman with other duties, other rights. And he was there, facing her, filling up the world. In her benumbed state he had been almost invisible—so much of life as she had clung to the idea of the baby. When he appeared to her it was as a ghost from which she shrank, from which every instinct turned her away. But now he stood there, as he had stood all the time, looking her in the face. Had he been doing so all these years? or had she been invisible to him as he to her? She was seized with a great trembling as she asked herself that question. Had he been watching her through the dark, as through the light,

keeping his eye upon her, waiting? She shuddered, but all her faculties became vivid, living, at this touch. And then there were other questions to ask: What would he do? Failing that, more intimate still—What would she do, Lily, herself? What, now that she was free, alone, with no bond upon her, what should she do? This question shook her very being. She could go on no longer with her life of lies—what should she do?

Sir Robert's man of business came from Edinburgh as soon as the news reached him. He told her that she was, as she had a right to be, her uncle's sole heir, there being no other relation near enough to be taken into consideration at all. Should she tell him at once what her real position was? It was a painful thing for Lily to do, and until she was able to set out upon that search for her child, which was still her first object, she had a superstitious feeling that something might happen, something that would detain or delay her, if she told her secret at once. She had arranged to go away on the morning after the funeral. That day, before Mr. Wallace left Dalrugas, she resolved that she would tell him, and, through him, all who were there. Her heart beat very loud at the thought. To keep it so long, and then in a moment give it up to the discussion of all the world! To reveal—was it her shame?—oh, shame, indeed, to have deceived every one, her uncle, every creature who knew her. But yet, not shame, not shame, in any other way. Much surprised was Mr. John Wallace, W.S., Sir Robert's man of business, to find how indifferent Miss Ramsay was as to the value and extent of the property her uncle had left her. She said "Yes," to all his statements, sometimes interrogatively, sometimes in simple assent: but he saw that she did not take them in, that the figures had no meaning for her. Her mind was otherwise absorbed. She was thinking of something. When he asked her, not without a recollection of things he had heard, as he said to himself, "long ago," when Sir Robert's niece had been sent off to the wilds out of some young birkie's way, whether there was anyone whom she would like specially summoned for the funeral, Lily looked up at him with a quick, almost terrified glance, and said, "No, no." She had, he felt, certainly something on her mind. I don't know whether, in those days, the existence of a private and hidden story

was more common than now: there were always facilities for such things in Scotland in the nature of the marriage laws, and many anxious incidents happened in families. A man acknowledging a secret wife, of whose existence nobody had known, was common enough. But a young lady was different. At all events there could be no doubt that this young lady had something on her mind.

The arrangements were all made in a style befitting Sir Robert's dignity. The persons employed came from Edinburgh with a solemn hearse and black horses, and all the gloomiest paraphernalia of death. A great company gathered from the country all about. They had begun to arrive, and a number of carriages were already waiting round to show the respect of his neighbours for the old gentleman, of whom they had actually known so little. The few farmers who were his tenants on the estate, which included so little land of a profitable kind among the moors (not yet profitable) and the mountains, waited outside in their rough gigs, but several of the gentlemen had gathered in the drawing-room, where cake and wine were laid out upon a table, and Mr. Douglas, now the minister of Kinloch-Rugas, stood separate, a little from the rest, prepared to "give the prayer." The Church of Scotland knew no burial service in those days, other than the prayer which preceded the carrying forth of the coffin. Two ladies had driven over, with their husbands, to stay with Lily when the procession left the house. They did not know very much of her, but they were sorry for her in her loneliness. The appearance of a woman at a funeral was an unknown thing in those days, in Scotland, and never thought of. This little cluster of black dresses was in a corner of the room, in the faint light of the shadowed windows, Lily's pale face tremulous with an agitation, which was not grief, forming the point of highest light in the sombre room, among the high-coloured rural countenances. She meant to tell them—on their return.

It was at this moment, in the preliminary pause, when Mr. Douglas, standing out in the centre of the room, was about to lift his hand as the signal for the prayer—about to begin—that a rapid step became audible, coming up the stairs, stumbling a little on the uppermost steps as most people did. It was nothing wonderful that someone should be a

little late, yet there was something in the step which made even the most careless member of the company look round. Lily, absorbed in her thoughts, was startled by the sound, she could not tell why. She moved her head a little, and it so happened that the gentlemen standing about, by an instinctive movement stepped aside from between her and the door, so as to leave room for the entrance of the new-comer. He was heard to quicken his pace, as if fearing to be too late, and the minister stood with his hand raised—waiting till the interruption should be over and the tardy guest had appeared.

Then the door opened quickly, and Ronald Lumsden came in. He was in full panoply of mourning, according to the Scotch habit, his hat, which was in his hand, covered with crape, his sleeves with white "weepers," his appearance that of a chief mourner. "I am not too late?" he said, as he came in. Who was he? Some of those present did not know. Was he some unacknowledged son, turning up at the last moment, to turn away the inheritance? Mr. Wallace stepped out a little to meet him, in consternation. Suddenly it flashed through his memory that this was the young fellow out of whose way Lily Ramsay had been sent by her uncle. He knew Lumsden well enough. He made a sign to him to be silent, pointing to the minister, who stood interrupted, ready to begin.

"I see," said Ronald, in the proper whisper, with a nod of his head: and then he stepped straight up through the little lane made for him, to where Lily sat, like an image of stone, her lips parted with a quick, fluttering breath. He took her hand and held it in his, standing by her side. "Pardon me that I come so late," he said, "I was out of town: but I am still in time. Mr. Wallace, I will take my place after the coffin as the representative of my wife." This was said rapidly but calmly, in the complete self-possession of a man who knows he is master of the situation. There was scarcely a pause, the astonished company had scarcely time to look into each other's face, when the proceedings went on. The minister's voice arose, with that peculiar cadence which is in the sound of prayer. The men stood still, arrested in their excitement, shuffling with their feet, covering their faces with one hand, so long as they could keep up that difficult position. But

this was all unlike a funeral prayer. The atmosphere had suddenly become full of excitement, the pulsations quickened in every wrist.

Lily remained in her chair: she did not rise. It was one of the points of decorum that a woman should not be able to stand on such an occasion. The two ladies, all one quiver of curiosity, stood behind her, and Ronald by her side, holding her hand. He did not give it up, though she had tried to withdraw it, but stood close by her, holding his hat, with its long streams of crape, in his other hand, his head drooped a little, and his eyes cast down in reverential sympathy. To describe what was in her mind would be impossible. Her heart had given one wild leap, as if it would have choked her, and then a sort of calm of death had succeeded. He held her hand, pressing it softly from time to time. He gave no sign but this of any other feeling but the proper respectful attention: while she sat paralysed. And then came the stir—the movement. He let her hand drop, and, bending over her, touched her forehead with his lips: and then he made a sign to the astonished men about, even to Mr. Wallace, who had been, up to this moment, the chief authority, to precede him. There was a sort of a gasp in the astonished assembly, but everyone obeyed Ronald's courteous gesture. There was nothing presumptuous, nothing of the upstart in it: it was the calm and dignified confidence of the master of the house. He was the last to leave the room, which he did with another pressure of Lily's hand, and a glance to the ladies behind, which said, as distinctly as words: "Take care of my wife." And he was the first in the procession, placing himself at once behind the coffin. The burying ground was not far away—it was one of those lonely places among the hills, with a little chapel in ruins, a relic of an older form of faith, within its gray walls, which are so pathetic and so solemn. The long line of men walking two and two made a great show in their black procession, their feet ringing upon the hard frost-bound road. But Ronald walked alone, in front, as if he had been Sir Robert's son. And his heart was full of a steady and sober elation. It had been a hard fight: but he had conquered. Though he was not a son, but an enemy, he was, as he had always intended, Sir Robert's heir.

*(To be continued.)*



## A VISION OF FAIR WOMEN.

BY MRS. ORPEN.

"'Tis beauty that doth oft make women proud."

*Henry VI.*

PHILOSOPHERS have written essays on its unreality, and preachers have delivered homilies on its vanity, yet beauty in women, mere physical beauty, has ever been prized, among civilized races, above silver and gold. And this, too, in spite of the easily demonstrable fact that beauty often leads its possessor into the depths of misery and disgrace.

Among beautiful women who are not quite legendary the first place must be accorded to Egypt's swarthy queen, Cleopatra, tenth of the name in the mouldy dynasties of her land, but first, last, and only one of the name in the mind of posterity. It is impossible to make Cleopatra's sculptured image coincide with our ideas of extraordinary beauty. A fat, thick-lipped girl, with a dimple in her chin: such would be the opinion of nine out of ten beholders, were they not told that these were the features of the woman whose beauty subdued a Cæsar and a Marc Antony. She was a precocious beauty, for she was scarcely yet sixteen when Cæsar entered Alexandria as conqueror and her foe.

Cleopatra resolved to see Cæsar, and this though all those who surrounded him were determined not to allow her to approach. One evening at dusk, she crossed the river, along with a single attendant, who presented himself at Cæsar's gate, with a heavy roll of carpet upon his shoulder, which he was to deliver to the Roman General. The carpet was allowed to enter into Cæsar's presence, when the bearer laid it gently upon the floor and unrolled Cleopatra out of it.

She cast the spell of her magical charm around him, all cold and unimpressionable as Cæsar seemed to be, and soon had conquered her conqueror.

It was the same, twenty years later, with Marc Antony. Cited to appear before him as judge, at Tarsus, she did indeed appear, not to answer for her crimes, however, but to take his heart and senses prisoner. Marc Antony forgot country, wife, home, and honour, in the presence of the

"Serpent of Old Nile," this strange, bewitching woman, whose memory has outlived that of her country, and who, even yet, can stir the music of a poet's song. Whether she was fair in the flesh it matters not to us now, for, by long usage, she has become a beautiful woman:

"A queen with swarthy cheeks,  
and bold, black eyes,  
Brow-bound with burning gold."

The Romans seem not to have set great store by female beauty—at least, the names of women which have come down to us are those who were famous as mothers of stern men, or as the wives of great princes, or, yet again,

as the infamous daughters of wise emperors. Of mere soft, beautiful women, there is no trace among that fiercely-fighting race of Rome.

Mary Queen of Scots is, in some measure, very like Cleopatra, in the poetic destiny which has become hers. She is ideally beautiful, and will probably ever remain the queen of our imagination, but whether she was really beautiful is quite another question. The many portraits—some authentic—which figured in the Stuart Exhibition, would seem to prove that she was not a surpris-



CLEOPATRA.

ingly lovely woman. Yet it is rank treason to say so. She must have been endowed with some of the powers of witchery that Cleopatra possessed, since she made all her contemporaries sing her charms. Poets, historians, and musicians, all perform in chorus over the beauty of Mary. Her history is so famous that all know it: how the five-days-old baby became queen on the death of her father, and how the nine-months-old baby was crowned in solemn state and pageantry, with crown, sceptre, and sword, and how she cried all the time—a fitting symbol of her future reign! The twofold Queen of Scotland and of France—poor Mary Stuart—wept out her life in a prison and died on a scaffold. A daughter of the House of Guise, married to a son of Catherine de Médicis, she was a woman of many crimes and more faults, yet who can withhold his pity from so fair a sufferer? The beauty of Mary Stuart dominates us still, three centuries after her death.

Kings, at least within historic times, have never shown themselves backward in their admiration of female beauty. Quite the contrary.

Yet it is a singular fact that, with three exceptions, beauty has never raised a woman to the throne. Those three exceptions are Anne Boleyn, Bianca Capello, and the Empress Eugénie.

Anne Boleyn's history is familiar to all. The lurid tragedy of her death on Tower Hill has made it impossible for anyone to forget the story of her sudden elevation to the throne. She was a sprightly dame, but here again we are met by the question—Was she very beautiful, according to our ideas? The portraits of her which have

come down to us differ markedly in type. She had a long, slender neck, as we know from her own lips, for she congratulated herself upon its slenderness when she came to lay it upon the block.

Anne Boleyn, when still quite young, accompanied Henry's sister, Mary, to France, in 1514, when the latter went to be married to the old king, Louis XII. It was at the Court of France she probably learned many of her captivating graces, for she came back an accomplished young lady—far too accomplished indeed for her comfort and happiness. She possessed the perilous power of amusing the king, and long experience shows that few powers are more fatal to their possessor.

Bianca Capello was a young Venetian lady of high station, who, in 1565, ran away from home along with a neighbouring noble and all her father's jewels. She was still in her teens, but was a confirmed beauty nevertheless. The young pair hastened to Florence after a secret marriage, and were there pursued by the vengeance of Bianca's step-mother, who pined for the



MARY STUART.

jewels. A price was set upon the bridegroom's head, and he, in order to make a friend for himself in high places, showed his bride to Francesco dei Medici, son of the Duke, and affianced husband of an Austrian archduchess. The young prince was overwhelmed with admiration for Bianca, but kept her in the background in deference to public opinion and the archduchess—at least, until the death of his father: after that he was less circumspect. Bianca's husband becoming troublesome, he was assassinated, and the unfortunate archduchess dying—

we will hope a natural death—the road to the throne was at length clear for Bianca. Accordingly she was publicly married to the Duke



ANNE BOLEYN.

Francesco, amid vast official rejoicing and much spending of money. The Republic of Venice reconsidered its opinion concerning her, and, with much pomp, adopted her as its own daughter of Saint Marc, conveniently ignoring the episode of the paternal jewels and the price it had set upon her first husband's head. In 1587, having no children to succeed them, the grandduke and the grandduchess considered it would be seemly to reconcile themselves with their heir and brother, Cardinal Ferdinand. This person had always hated Bianca, and she had repaid his hate in kind. But it is ill for an old prince to quarrel with his successor, so the reigning pair invited brother Ferdinand to a fraternal feast at Poggio a Caiano, just outside Florence. He came, and a most Medicean *dénouement* ensued. The Duke and Duchess both fell ill and died, one after the other, with such startling rapidity, that their brother, the Cardinal, was at much pains to explain the exact disease of which they perished. Nevertheless, people did say he had poisoned them, and they have gone on saying it ever since. He referred to his late sister-in-law as "the detestable Bianca," in several of his first public documents, and the double death was quite too convenient to be

altogether natural. Then, too, Ferdinand was a Medici and a cardinal!

Queen Elizabeth's Court was not a favourable place for the uprising of female beauty, for it is a well-known fact that Her Majesty allowed no woman to be beautiful save herself, and her faithful courtiers were far too loyal to fail to agree with her. Poets did indeed sing of the beauty of their loves, as it is their nature to, but one can never depend upon the evidence of a poet in such a matter. They see everything as through a mist, gloriously. Note the remarkable instance of the poet Surrey and the Fair Geraldine. Apart from Surrey's sonnet, what we know of this lady is that she was a daughter of that distressful House of Geraldine that so often convulsed Ireland; that she was befriended by the Princess Mary, and was married, when quite a child, to an elderly gentleman of the name of Browne, and again afterwards to the Lord High Admiral Clifford. But the most painful fact concerning the Fair Geraldine is her authentic portrait, which still hangs in the ancestral home of the family in Ireland. "Bright her hue," says the poet, from which we infer she had the fashionable red hair that Queen Elizabeth afterwards made *de rigueur*. But for all her high



BIANCA CAPELLO.

cheek bones, and her hard, strongly-marked features and somewhat heavy nose, she has had the rare good fortune to be embalmed in a poet's



THE FAIR GERALDINE.

verse, and therefore, in spite of fact, features, and history, will for ever be "The Fair Geraldine."

If poets, however, cannot be depended upon to describe their lady-loves, artists at least can faithfully portray their fair ones.

Helena Fourment, whose fair face looks out from so many of Rubens' pictures, was the painter's second wife. She was also his niece, being daughter of his first wife's sister. She was all that he admired in the way of fairness and fatness. At the time of his marriage he was fifty-three and she was sixteen, an unequal match as far as years go, but Rubens was then the foremost painter of his age and was able to give present luxury and future pictorial immortality to his wife. Beautiful as she was, Helena Fourment is only known to us as the wife Rubens loved to paint.

The Court of Louis XIV. was but an enlarged edition of that of Charles II. The same vices reigned in both, and Madame de Montespan was in all things the contemporary and counterpart of Lady Castlemaine, even in her furious temper. Madame de Montespan, however, was not merely a lovely woman, she was a witty and a clever one as well. She came of that family of Mortemarts whose wit was proverbial. "The wit and the tongue of the Mortemarts," was a saying born of

a hundred stinging gibes. During the years of her favour she was madly extravagant and amassed an enormous fortune, but in her old age she expended it in kindly attempts to relieve the sufferings of the poor. Her astonishing beauty remained almost unimpaired at her death, at the age of 70, in 1683. Madame de Sévigné, however, says she became amazingly wrinkled, and that her skin was a network of the finest wrinkles, but possibly her judgment, like that of Pepys in the case of Lady Castlemaine, was affected by the fact that Madame de Montespan was no longer in favour.

Madame de Pompadour has dishonoured an honourable name, long known among the nobles of Limousin. But the dead and gone Pompadours could console themselves with the reflection that she was not of their ilk, for their race died out 50 years before she was born. The notorious Madame de Pompadour was the grand-daughter of a butcher in Paris, a mere nobody named Poisson. She was very beautiful, however, and also clever, so that when she appeared at Court as the wife of a small financier, she captivated the king, who was Louis XV., and easily captured. She was a



RUBENS' WIFE.

woman of vast energy, and as the king was laziness itself, he allowed her to misrule France for twenty years in his name. So powerful did this daughter of the butcher become, that proud Maria Theresa, daughter of the Caesars, called her 'friend,' and she was able to pay Frederick II. for a sneer by launching France against him in the Seven Years' War. She made or unmade ministers by a wave of her fair hand, and smiled upon poets until they lost their heads and wrote verses to her—even Voltaire did it. She had some knowledge of music and painting, and a great liking for both. It was she who fostered the Sèvres porcelain industry and raised it to its highest excellence. The very chiefest treasure a porcelain hunter can now become possessed of is a Sèvres vase painted by Madame de Pompadour. She maintained her position until her death in

1764, when, at the age of 42, she died with a joke upon her lips. As she lay at her last breath the

curate of the Madeleine came to see her and offer her the consolations of religion. He rose to go. "One moment, Monsieur le Curé," gasped the expiring marquise, "we will go away together"—and she died. Louis XV., a man of the least heart with which it is possible to exist, sent a joke after her. It was a stormy, wild day when the funeral cortège left Versailles for Paris. "Madame la marquise has a wet day for her journey to Paradise,"

laughed the king, and all the courtiers laughed likewise and handed on the joke to posterity.

Madame du Barry was a seamstress, born at Vaucouleurs, the home of Joan of Arc. Had she lived there always, it would have been better for her and the world. But she came to Paris, and,



MARQUISE DE MONTESPAN.



COMTESSE DU BARRY.



worse still, to Versailles, in the last years of Louis XV.'s dishonoured life. There is no doubt she was very lovely. Greuse painted her often, and it

retired to a convent to think over her life and to try to amend it, maybe. The Revolution found her, as it did many a less beautiful woman, and



LA MARQUISE DE POMPADOUR.

is said that his exquisite "Broken Pitcher" is a living portrait of Madame du Barry while still a girl. When the old king died, Madame du Barry

dragged her to the scaffold. She was accused of having worn mourning "for the tyrant." Poor wretch! It was one of her few sinless acts. She

was found guilty of trying to save royalists and refugees. That was perhaps her only meritorious act. She was condemned to death for them. All her many sins had gone unpunished: she was beheaded for her few virtues. It is a topsy-turvy world. The guillotine cut short her piercing shrieks for mercy. "One moment, one moment, monsieur le bourreau, one moment more," she cried, in strange similarity to the last words of Madame de Pompadour. It was noticed that of all the thousands of women who died on the scaffold

during the Reign of Terror Madame du Barry alone acted with cowardice. The shadowy black page in our illustration, who holds the tray for Madame's chocolate, was one Zamor, a little negro she was very fond of. It was he who betrayed her hiding-place to the revolutionary tribunal and brought his indulgent mistress to the block. One's horror at his ingratitude turns almost into pity for her. In after years, whenever people discovered that he was Madame du

Barry's Zamor, they fell away from him as from a leper.

Lady Hamilton's features are familiar to us all, from Romney's many and lovely pictures of her in all attitudes and all characters. Hers was one of the most perfect faces and forms that the world ever saw. She appears to have been born at Hawarden, but the name of Hamilton was almost the only honourable thing about her, and that was not hers but her husband's. Emma Lyon she is usually called, but who she was no one knows. As wife of the English ambassador at Naples she became

an intimate friend of the queen of that country, an intimacy that did no honour to her majesty. It was at Naples she saw Nelson and cast upon his name the only dishonour it ever knew. Her face had bewitched many a man before then, and he was no more proof against its potent charm than the others had been. The last letter he ever wrote was to Lady Hamilton, and it was found lying open upon his desk after the dread tragedy and glorious victory of Trafalgar. History has dealt leniently with Lady Hamilton for the love Nelson bore her.



LADY HAMILTON.

The illustrious lady whose portrait closes this series was one of the most beautiful of our times. It was not because she was an empress that people found Eugénie beautiful. She was surpassingly lovely long before the perilous crown of France encircled her brow. Mademoiselle de Montijo excited all men's admiration from her earliest years. Prosper Mérimée, in his letters, thus speaks of her: "She is very tall, very white, prodigious-

ly beautiful, with the hair a Titian would love." Her lovely red gold hair, so rare in France, always attracted attention and often ill-natured comment. I myself, when a child in Paris, remember being told it could not be true, it was too beautiful. But when sorrows had dimmed the shining hair people repented, and when the beauty was gone they said: "Ah, yes, it was real." The hair that so stirred the Parisian tongue was, after all, not completely astonishing in one who was descended from a Scotch family. The Empress's grandfather on her mother's side was pure Scotch.



EMPERESS EUGÉNIE.



And Scotch, too, was her clear white skin and rosy mouth, but her tiny hands and feet and her shoulders and arms, "the loveliest in Europe," drew their graceful outlines from her Spanish ancestry. This fair descendant of two opposing races was much in Paris along with her mother in the stormy days of the Second Republic. They, but especially the young lady, were ardent Buonapartists. Napoleon, then Prince President, could hardly fail to appreciate such an adherent. Made-moiselle de Montijo was the favourite guest at Compiègne, where the Prince President showed her such marked attention that the other ladies were ready to tear her beautiful eyes out if they

could have done so with safety. As soon as Napoleon had mounted his rickety throne he invited the fair Eugénie to take the dangerous seat beside him. The betrothal was announced on the 1st of January, 1853, and the wedding took place on the 30th of the same month. Never, surely, did a fairer bride stand before the altar. Flashing in diamonds which received a brighter hue from her sweet face, tall and stately at the pinnacle of human glory, there we will leave her. For what has the childless, heartbroken mother, the dark robed widow, the exile at Farnborough, in common with the radiant Empress Eugénie, the handsomest woman of her time?



## "WHY FAIL WE EVER OF THE BEST?"

WHAT curse hath smit us that we may not know

The crowning comfort of possession's best?

Why must the plucked rose fade, and morn's soft glow

Be stifled in the broad noon's hot unrest?

Why are love's lustrous eyes peopled with fears?

Why is the brow of labour wet with grief?

Why from the flower of hope that life endears

Should Time suck sweetness, like the fluttering thief

That plies his plundering trade where roses bloom

And lilies dream i' the day?—Perchance because

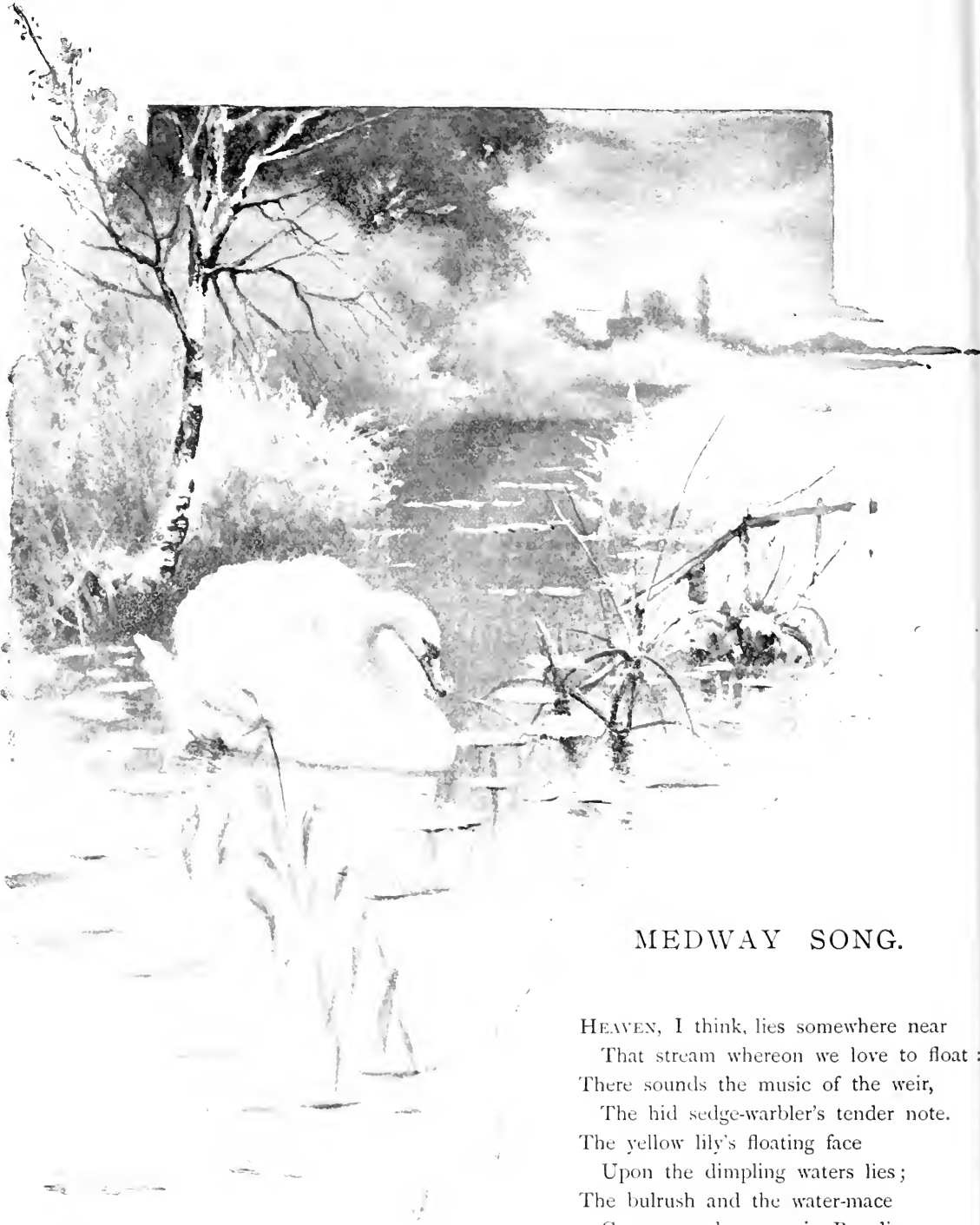
'Tis only prostrate 'neath the foot of Doom

The hurt heart owns the goodness of God's laws,

And, stumbling o'er the joy that mocked its eyes,

Is raised by Sorrow into Paradise.

WILLIAM K. HILL.



## MEDWAY SONG.

HEAVEN, I think, lies somewhere near  
 That stream whereon we love to float :  
 There sounds the music of the weir,  
 The hid sedge-warbler's tender note.  
 The yellow lily's floating face  
 Upon the dimpling waters lies ;  
 The bulrush and the water-mace  
 Grow gay, they say, in Paradise.

In Heaven, I know the sun goes down  
 Behind dim lines of violet hills,  
 And one forgets the sordid town  
 And life's loud crowd of vulgar ills.

Pale meadow-sweet, the summer's bride,  
 And golden yarrow, flaming fair,  
 Make brave the banks on either side ;  
 And oh, I would that I were there !

'Tis there the speckled thrushes sing,  
 The moor-hen builds her sheltered nest,  
 And from the tuneful quiet spring  
 The perfect flowers of peace and rest ;  
 The grey-green willow-tresses trail  
 Across the bosom of the stream,  
 And echoing down the enchanted vale  
 Ring faint songs, stolen from some lost dream.

The weed-grown locks are fringed with thyme,  
 The pool with pale forget-me-not ;  
 There love and fate forever rhyme,  
 And all Life's discords are forgot.  
 Life's secret sacred hidden things  
 Grow clear to us as those soft skies,  
 When joy outspreads her wide white wings  
 Above the stream of Paradise.

E. NESBIT.

## MEG OF THE BRAIDS.

BY EDWIN LESTER ARNOLD.

IF anyone had told handsome Maggie Nichols, as she sat dangling two stockingless legs over the stone edge of the harbour quay and watching the red-winged herring boats slip out one by one into the open sea beyond, that in a few short hours chance would have made her a heroine, the subject of the wondering admiration of a countryside, she would have laughed the idea to scorn. In truth the vigorous and comely young woman was feeling anything but a heroine just then, as she kicked those bare heels against the green weedy granite and turned sulkily away from the admiring eyes of the weather-bronzed, yellow-bearded young fishermen who, as their herring boats filed below, stopped for a minute in their stowing of mahogany-red nets and hauling of dripping ropes to glance and sigh up at that disdainful village beauty who sat enshrined above, amongst lobster-pots and herring-boxes. Seventeen, and as fresh-looking as an April morning, with a splendid wealth of brown hair piled up on top of her head, and long enough, the envious fisher-girls whispered amongst themselves, to lie upon the ground when its owner stood to the top of her no mean height, strong and supple, with a foot as sure as a mountain sheep's upon the treacherous green slopes of the precipices out yonder, with brown eyes as bright as the sea-bird's overhead and laughter as musical to a sailor's ears as the prattle of the southerly wind in the brown cordage as he turns homeward, the nimblest fingers amongst yarn and hempen sea-gear, the steadiest hand of any of the Thorswick women upon a tiller, and the readiest with an oar—what could any young fisherman hope for better than such a helpmate ?

But prosperous John Nichols' daughter was shy and proud. Many an ambitious quayman had made his proffer to her and had failed—the last of all of them was young James Gilmour. It was a pity so fine a fellow, the gossips said, should go and break his heart for such a minx, but Maggie's close companion, Janet Scott, knew that Gilmour had a better chance than all the others put together. Once already that young man had asked her to marry him, and, too much in earnest to take no for an answer, had come once more this very morning as she was sitting on the quay, and the girl, full of conceit and waywardness, though loving him all the time, had played with and mocked and at last sent poor Gilmour bitter and fierce to sea again. Had he but known how thin that mask of anger was, had he but persisted for another hour or two it might all have been different ; but if she could be proud so could he, and he had flung his great sea-boots across his shoulder and taken his bundle and strode away hating all maids, and—so he thought—Maggie Nichols best of all !

He had gone miserable and crestfallen, and Maggie was still too proud to call him back. She would not even look towards it as his boat passed out of the harbour, but turned to Janet Scott, sulkily biting between her white teeth a rebellious strand of that great hair of hers as she did so, and asked "Is he gone Janet?—is he looking back?"

"'Gone' ! ay Meg," said her friend, "and like a man who cares but little whether he comes back or no : and as for looking back !—he does it now, quick Mag—wave to him, 'tis thy last chance,—see he's standing all a-sag by the tiller eyeing you

with a face whiter than Monday linen, another minute and he will be round the point."

"You wave!" said the elder one, gloomily toying with an empty mussel shell, and the younger, whose heart was softer and her offers not so many, did not wait to be bid twice, but waved a scarf for a moment until the boat was round the bend and then turned and said after a moment's pause, "Well, Maggie Nichols, I suppose you know your own mind best, but you have sent the likeliest man in all the place to sea with a sore heart to-day, and 'tis an ill new meeting comes of an ill parting. Ay, and what is more, Meg," said that candid friend, growing a little warm with the other's overweening pride, "if it blows to-night and yon man be in peril then were I you I would not sleep a wink or have a moment's peace in house or out of it till his ship be safely back and you have spoken civilly at least to him,—nay that I would not!—not for your father's gold, and your good looks, and that hair that they say makes you so proud," and so saying the girl walked away and left the rebellious beauty to her uneasy thoughts.

Maggie went back to her work that day feeling worse than she had done for a long time. She sat and knitted alone in silence in the deep-recessed, green-paned window of her father's cottage, taking fugitive glances between the long-stemmed geraniums at the broad expanse of the sea that stretched out from their garden palings to the extreme limit of the sky, and at times she said bitter things to herself about all young men and Jamie Gilmour in particular, half hoping—perhaps for a minute at a time—that he would not come back to trouble her again, and then as the love she was vainly trying to smother and hold down asserted itself she would suffer ingenious tortures of regret at the thought of her coldness and watch with keen and guilty anxiety for the first sign of that rising wind which she felt would be but her deserts.

There was not long to wait. Before the afternoon was half done the sky darkened and turned to purple in the north, and the gulls, white as ivory against that ebony background, came trooping in from the open sea, the snowy linen began to flap upon the clothes-lines, and as the day wore out a fierce autumnal storm grew out of the northward, driving the great squadrons of low clouds before it and ribbing the sea with white under its hurrying feet. By daylight it was blowing a heavy gale and

all the fishing boats were safely in harbour except three; and two of those three never sent even a whisper of their fate back to the land! The third one was that upon which Gilmour served.

All day long frightened and repentant Maggie watched in the wind and the spray upon the quay amongst a crowd of eager women, and when the afternoon came and that grey veil that overhung the steep black hills and valleys of the sea, shutting out everything but the dull incessant roar of the storm, had given no sign of a sail behind it, she called her little brother Andrew and with him went out of the village up to the headland to the northward, hoping from there to learn something of the missing ship before the night fell. The rain and wind made it almost impossible to stand upon that grassy promontory, but those two crept along and before they had strained their eyes into the grey sea fog half an hour, the long-expected happened, for out of the mist shrouding the sea close below them plunged a brown sailed boat, the number Maggie knew so well showing large even at that distance upon its close-reefed mainsail, and, cushioned in white foam, its gleaming deck swept by great seas every minute, came staggering in to the land.

For a moment she had no idea but delight to think Gilmour was coming back at last, and then that fisherman's daughter saw with a spasm of new terror in spite of the rain that nearly blinded her, and the wind that made it difficult even to breathe, that his ship was being forced by the irresistible power behind out of the only road to the harbour beyond. Maybe the mist had deceived those on board or the strong swing of the currents had carried them from their reckoning; but almost as soon as that luckless craft appeared, she was within the great circle of underwater rocks that fringed the cliff and showed their heads now and again out of the confusion.

As the boat came in Maggie crept forward to the green edge of the cliff where the spume was lying in thick strands amongst the short hill grass and yellow cinque-foil and, clutching a grey fragment of rock in a nervous grasp, she glared over in the white caldron below with eyes that saw nothing but that ship and its peril as nearer and nearer it came and more and more certain seemed its destruction. There was still

just a chance that it might run through the inner channel and so weather the point, and Maggie stared through the veil of mist half hiding the wild play of the waves below with heart that hardly beat and pulses that stood still with expectation. Another minute and the ship, a dark shadow in the storm-haze, was in the teeth of the danger, another minute and she would be through—and then, quick as the changing sequence of a dream—it seemed to that unhappy girl, something went wrong on board, a rope broke, a tiller slipped and in an instant the Nichols' boat was end on for the shore—she came hurling out of the far twilight into the white arena just below, she rose reeling on to the summit of a great black swell right under Maggie's eyes and then with the force and straightness of a javelin thrown by a strong arm the cruel sea hurled her straight upon the iron edge of the shore—the girl saw the lugger stagger and plunge to the shock and strike again and burst like an earthen crock, there was a toss of spar and mast for a minute, a fine thin cry or two borne up out of the furious caldron of waters below and as Gilmour's sweetheart threw herself prone upon the grass and hid her face in her hands the hungry waves lapped down the last vestige of his ill-fated ship.

But to that apple-cheeked urchin Maggie's brother it was the bravest show, the most exciting incident since the spotted horses had come round with the great circus that time two years ago. He lay flat upon the very verge searching the wave swept ledges far underneath, and in a minute his keen young eyes had caught a sight of something moving near them, and with a cry that startled his sister out of her grief he shouted out—

"Maggie! Maggie!—old gaffer Giles is cast ashore—and another man's swimming hard in the swirl—" and then before his companion could sweep the tears out of her eyes and rush to his side he shouted again—"gaffer Giles has got upon the shelves, and t'other man's grasping at a rock—ay he's gone for good now!—nay there he rises again, and clings, and clammers waist-deep in the wash—there Meg—there, dost see him through the rift in the spray down by yonder rock with the hummock of waving grass upon it?" and Maggie saw in truth and her heart stirred within her, for in a minute her eyes, made keen and quick by love,

had recognised James Gilmour in that struggling, water-sodden figure.

Staggering and tottering as they crawled up the rocks out of the jealous clutches of the sea, with white faces, and bleeding hands, and clothes all in rags, Meg and her brother leaning over the sharp edge of the spray-swept precipice watched those two with desperate eagerness. And then first the older man gave out, and on a bare flat of rock about twenty feet from the waves collapsed suddenly and lay there without sign or motion an inanimate bundle of brown rags. Then both of those helpless spectators saw Gilmour, bruised and spent, scramble with a last effort a few yards higher up, and then totter and fall fainting across the foot of a treacherous shoot of loose shale that led sheer down to a swirling black pool between the rocks, and there he lay in a minute, far below them, his white face streaked with blood staring straight up through the gloom, and his body only stayed from destruction, it seemed, by a single point of rock scarce six inches high.

Poor Margaret's blood froze in her veins as she stared down at her lover's face and waited breathless in horrible momentary expectation to see him slip—she knew even as much as a deep sigh would start him—and go rolling down into the yawning mouth of that surging foam-laced gully below. But he did not slip, and presently as she watched her womanhood came back to her. She looked at old Harry Giles and she thought no human being could reach those two—she looked at Gilmour and she thought mayhap it might be done! and in another minute she was on foot and had shaken the sense back into her urchin brother. "Run Andrew, run," she cried, "run for your life and mine!—in yonder shieling is a coil of shepherd's rope with an iron bar for setting hurdles, and in the hollow beyond two men are cutting sedges, bring them quickly here—they will know what's to do—there, don't stand staring like that but go, and if it should happen that I did not come back—but never mind for that—away Andrew! run, my lad, for the sake of yonder men and me," and giving that awe-struck urchin one great kiss of many emotions she sent him racing inland while she herself turned back to the cliffs and without a waver began a desperate errand.

Active and strong, accustomed all her life to

climbing about these heights, yet even so that venture was almost too much for her. Down by jags and crevices Meg of the Braids scrambled, twisting and turning to right and left, following the narrow goat-paths under those dizzy walls till the goats that made them had turned back dismayed, and then, strong in her love and courage, taking to the ledges where the puffins built in the spring-time and no human being had ever been before. As she went down that desperate road, crawling and clinging and dropping from point to point, the hill-top grew fainter and fainter, while the thunder of the storm seemed more and more dreadful. Now for a minute she would see the two men, Giles nearest to her and Gilmour lying a little further off, and then a bend in the rocky wall would shut them from her view for an interval of dreadful suspense. At times as she slid from point to point of the ragged stone that tore her hands, with nothing but two strong arms and a cool head between herself and the destruction that waited below, the wind would beat so fiercely that every moment seemed her last, and the spray, heavy and cold, was driven by the storm with cruel force upon her face till she was well-nigh breathless.

But still the girl persisted and presently after ten minutes' desperate effort, was down into reach of the long white lashes of the waves and close to the old fisherman. Then began her misfortunes. She called twice gently to that shivering heap of clothes, and at the second call Giles looked up dazed and stupid, then staggered to his weak legs, smiling feebly to see that friendly face come out of the sea-spray, extending as he did so a trembling hand. As he put it forth he staggered and missed his footing and before the rescuer could stir a finger had plunged backward off the ledge, had struck his head with a dreadful crash against another ledge and was gone headlong into the sea below.

It was no time for sentiment or vain regrets. Gulping down her horror at that sight Meg scrambled back a yard or two and turned to where Gilmour was lying. She saw with tremulous satisfaction he still lay as he had done all the time near the bottom of the steep rubble shoot, with a sheer wall of cliff above and underneath him the sea, growing darker and darker every moment as the night came on. She saw

also it was impossible to approach that insensible figure from above, but just below a solid jut of rock would give a scanty foothold, and to that she scrambled with infinite peril to herself, cutting her knees and her hands until, half blinded by the salt spray and half dazed by the ceaseless thunder of the waves about her, in a moment of silent triumph, the brave girl came within touch of her lover, a white shoulder staying him up and a white arm round him, and as she whispered his name and laid her cheek against his—there was no one looking—and felt under his torn blue jersey the feeble flutter of his life still beating, for the first time in that day of keen anxiety she cried freely and plenteously.

But he was not yet saved and very eagerly she waited the coming of the rescuers. Before long a head—a black dot—showed over the edge of the cliff far above, and then another, and a smaller one between them, and a rope was paid out, first an almost invisible gossamer up amongst the crags and then a blessed, thickening strand that came swinging and crawling down over the gannets' ledges and the little patches of rock-flower that streaked the cliffs with purple in the far away summer-time, presently it was close at hand and after one or two futile attempts she had hold of it and had drawn it down just so that it touched James Gilmour's shoulder—and there it stopped! One yard more and she would be able to pass the cord round his chest and send him up to those strong arms above, it only wanted one yard more, and yet those poor three feet were strangely slow in coming! Meg pulled as hard as she dared, then stared above, and signed to them to lower more, and pulled again,—why did they keep her waiting so? and looked, and tugged, and then turned faint all over for a moment, for she had read the reluctant signals of the men on top aright, and guessed the miserable fact that there was not another inch to spare, the very utmost limit of the rope was reached there as it hung, three feet too short, and Meg must tie her lover with what she had or let him go!

Long afterwards she used to say there was no moment in the day so bad as that. All the excitement that had buoyed her up of changing hope and fear and exertion seemed suddenly to have gone, and in its place came a vague despair as she stared at that rope which ought to have

meant salvation but only mocked her as precious minute after minute slipped by. The frightened girl knew well enough those above could give no help. There was not another strand of cord or cable for a mile or more, and the little village itself was out of call or signal,—before a messenger could get there and come back with the means of rescue she and that precious burden that lay so limp and heavy upon her arm would long ago have gone into the black sea behind. And all about the short winter day was dying grey and dark, and under the lift of the hurrying clouds the stinging wind was coming keener and more keen, the chill of the damp rocks against which her breast was pressed seemed numbing all her faculties, the tide was rising and the angry sea was making every moment closer and closer attempts to wrap its white arms about those two. And there was that half dead man, whom she dared not try to lift, resting so that if he but moved with a spark of returning life, or only sighed, he might slip and sweep them both from their frail holds into the death below. Maggie was not proud then, but as she wept soft spasmodic woman-tears and thought of all the episodes of her short seventeen years, it seemed the very end of all things had come at last and there was nothing left but to die.

She was not a bit proud now, but wondered a little whether it would not be better to wrap young Gilmour in her arms and so take one step back with him into what was after all only oblivion, sparing herself the long hopeless wait and him the misery of the awakening. And then she thought of all the rope that lay unvalued on the quays at home, how for an arm's length of that neglected hemp she would give her youth and beauty, her strength, her hair—ay, her very hair itself!

As she thought that last thought the girl started a little, she said the words over to herself again, and then her face brightened—an inspiration, an idea, a happy flash of invention had come upon her!—why not make use in this emergency of those splendid strands of brown hair that nature had given to her? She clapped her hand upon her bare tumbled head and felt there that queenly pile, salt-soaked in truth and frayed out upon the gale, but soft and strong and supple; she looked up through the blinding veil of spray ringing

against the streaming cliffs above to where those tiny hopeless dots were waiting aimlessly, and down below to where the churning sea was looming up through the twilight, then, laughing a little, turned back to her lover and passed a hand across him till in the folds of his wet jersey she got hold of and drew from its place his strong sheath knife.

With just one sigh and something that looked like a half blush under the wet glaze of her skin, the girl untied her snood and shook down about her those great broad plaits that surely kind Providence had put there for this very use, and seizing them close up, without giving a moment for thought or remorse, with three strong cuts shore them from her head. Twisting the two lower ends together with swift clever fingers that had served a life-long apprenticeship at such work, Meg slipped the sleek brown belt round young Gilmour and then, holding the loose ends in her teeth, seized the rope again. It was no good trying to tie hemp and hair, Maggie knew that well enough, but they might be woven together as she had woven worse material a hundred times before. And now she unrove a foot or so of the cord and bound the hair into it, holding Jamie steady meanwhile with a shoulder and working with desperate zeal until presently it was done, a coarse rough splice such as any skipper in the fleet would have laughed at, but strong withal.

One fugitive, half reproachful stroke Meg gave to the ragged stubble of her own poor head, and then waved a signal to those above, and they, wondering but obedient, began to pull upon the rope: there was a moment of infinite anxiety while the heroine waited to see if the strange belt would hold, and when that brave girl saw through tears and spinning salt-sea spume that it would!—saw the plaits strain, and stretch, and tighten,—saw strong hemp and gentle hair that love and repentant pride had twisted, blend and weld together, and grow stronger for the union, saw her lover drawn into safety out of the very jaws of death, she crouched down to wait her turn in an hysterical outburst of joy and fear and weariness.

It can hardly be necessary to say much more. The bright morning sun was streaming into her father's room in their cottage the next morning, and Meg sat knitting a winter shawl, a willing

watcher by the side of the bed on which James Gilmour lay feeble and pale still but recovering. The sunshine was lending a splendid scarlet to the flowers of the geraniums in the window and a fine ethereal blue to the peat smoke that twined into the outer air that was as clear as a mountain burn after a storm, an ancient clock was ticking itself somewhere outside, but no other sound broke the stillness until Gilmour, who had been awake some hours, turned over and looking earnestly at the girl said,

"Meg! what made you come down the cliff for me like that?"

Now that a question which the lady had asked herself several times during the still hours of the night, and whatever her own conclusions were, the healthy red upon her cheek only deepened a shade, and the bright pins only twinkled in the sunshine a thought the faster through the worsted as she answered slowly and without looking up,

"It was only civil,—I could not leave you so,—all awash like that for the tide to sweep away."

"But Meg," said Jamie slowly, for he had been thinking over it all and watching her in

secret, "folk do not risk their lives and scramble down crags where no man or woman ever went before or will hereafter out of bare civility," and then in a minute, after an eager pause, he had put out a strong brown hand and somehow got hold of hers, and "Meg!" he said, "if I asked you that question I asked last time upon the quay, if I asked you, lass, once more to be my wife should I be rebuffed again?"

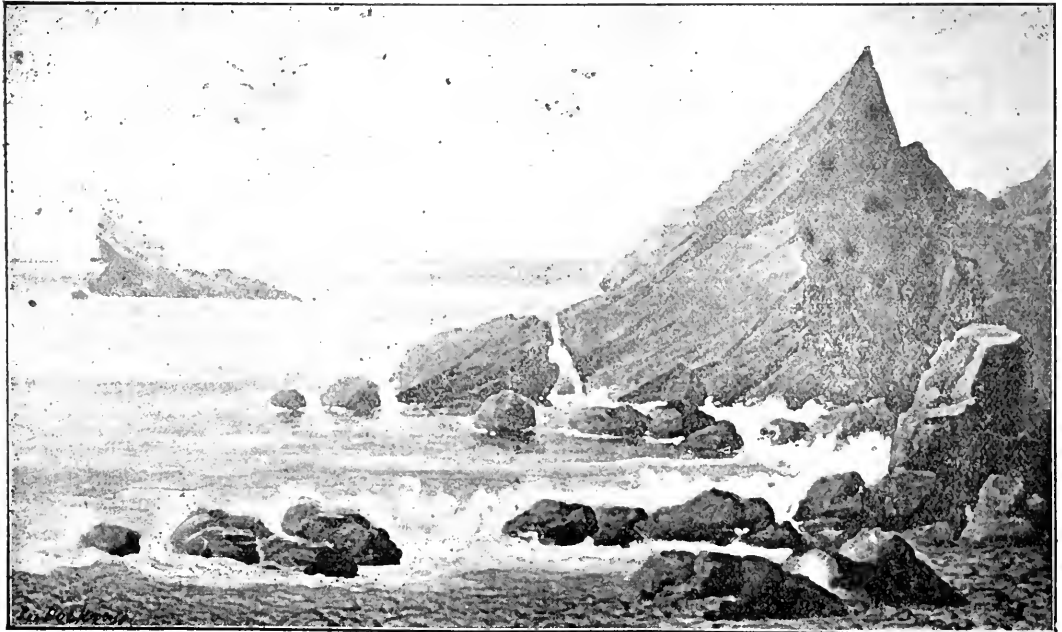
"What!" said that heroine in home-spun, blushing charmingly, "marry me all shorn and cropped like this: why, lad, the folk would laugh you sad and sorry in a week!"

"I would not care how much they laughed."

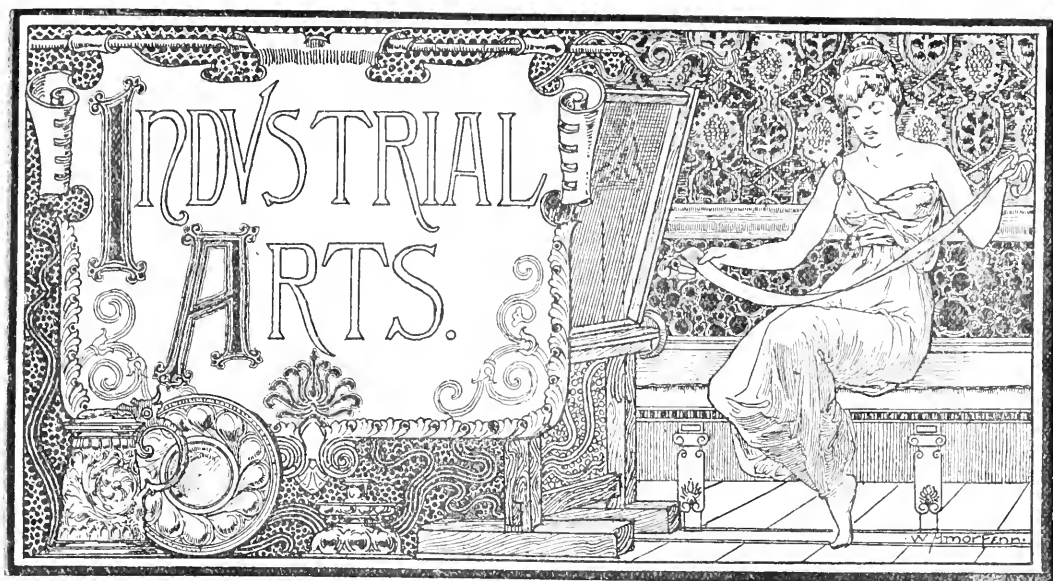
"Ay, but I think you would."

"I swear a thousand times I would not."

"Oh well then," said Meg of the Braids, "if you were sure of that then,—then I think,—perhaps,—I would leave the question for you to answer as you wished!" and happy Gilmour knew at that instant that there was no medicine for his hurts like the glance she gave him, and no salve in the world for his bruised and tired body like the magic of her touch as she put her hands again in his!







#### IV. THE ART OF POTTERY.

BY KINETON PARKES.

ONE of the few arts possessed by primitive man was that of the potter, and pieces of pottery have helped us very largely to our understanding of what life was like in pre-historic times. Not that the essential of what we now regard as the art of pottery was then known, the potter's wheel. On the contrary, the productions of the pre-historic potter were very primitive indeed, and consisted of lumps of clay moulded with the hand and with pieces of wood, the only object being to produce a rude receptacle for water or other things, no regard at all being paid to lightness of construction or convenience in using. Yet as pre-historic man, with his germ of artistic feeling, made his rough drawings on the bones of the animals whose flesh he had devoured, so the same instinct prompted him to use a rough form of decoration upon his pottery, and pieces remain to us of his handiwork containing such examples of early ornamentation. These early forms of the potter's art were less enduring than pottery as made to-day is likely to be, for as they were primitive in shape, so was their process of manufacture primitive, and the clay of which they were made was never reduced to such hardness by the baking process as modern pieces are.

The old pieces were baked in an open fire until they were hard enough to sustain the effect of ordinary careful usage. They were usually made for three purposes: for eating and drinking, cooking, and for disposing of the ashes of the burnt bones of the dead; and all these varieties have been discovered in the barrows of Britain and those of other European countries.

The properties possessed by the various materials with which we are brought in contact every day of our lives have suggested to the mind similes which have in course of time become proverbial, and we say "as smooth as silk," "as hard as iron," "as brittle as glass," and we say, too, "as soft as clay." It is in the plasticity of clay that the whole art of pottery exists: that beautiful quality which admits of the moulding of all kinds of shapes while it is in the moist condition, which shapes may be made permanent by changing the plasticity of the clay to rigidity by means of heat, which dries it or drives out the water that rendered it mobile.

The words pottery and earthenware are very inclusive, and cover a multitude of things. As regards methods of manufacture, however, there are briefly two, moulding and throwing. Moulding

includes all pottery which is shaped by the hand, by tools, or out of prepared moulds; throwing, all that which is produced on the potter's wheel. As regards kinds of earthenware, there are three



VASE: "PATE SUR PALE."

main divisions, which have been termed Pottery, or more properly Soft Pottery, Stoneware, and Porcelain. Soft pottery includes the pre-historic ware with which we have already dealt: biscuit ware, which is merely baked clay of a very porous nature like our common flower-pots; glazed ware, or biscuit ware which has been covered with a coating of glass or glazing material to render it harder, while destroying its porosity, examples of which we have in our ordinary earthenware dinner services; and enamelled ware, which is soft pottery covered with a glaze into which metallic salts have been introduced to give opacity or colour, examples of which we have in the well-known Italian and other varieties of majolica. Stoneware is generally heavy, durable, and cheap, and examples of it we have in the common yellow ginger beer bottle, and the grey and blue Flemish and German ware. This, unlike soft pottery, is infusible, while the former is easily reduced to a semi-fluid condition by heat. Porcelain in this respect comes between the two, being fusible at a very high degree of temperature. There are two

main varieties of porcelain, or china, which is semi-transparent: the examples of the first come from the potteries of Japan or China, and are called hard porcelain, being made from the natural Kaolin or China clay with a felspar glaze; and the second variety we have from the great Sevres Works in its earlier productions, which are called soft porcelain, and are made from a manufactured paste and covered with a manufactured glaze made from a lead salt. Under these three main varieties the whole of what we call pottery may be placed: from the early examples made by the pre-historic man, through the work of the Egyptian, Assyrian, Phœnician, Greek, Etruscan, Roman, Persian, Japanese, and Chinese, down to modern Dutch, French, and English.

Ancient pottery, like pre-historic pottery, was made chiefly for two purposes, for the domestic uses of the living, and for the reception of the ashes and the records of the dead. Much of what we know of the domestic life and history of the early Egyptians has been gleaned from the tombs, where the knowledge was kept for thousands of



VASE: "PATE SUR PATE."

years by these silent witnesses of the potter's skill. The potter was therefore, in a way, the chronicler of his country's life. At a later date this function disappeared, and the chief purposes of pottery were

for domestic use and for ornament. Most of the pottery since mediæval times which has come down to us belongs to one or other of these two classes; and to-day the state of things has not altered.

Pottery in England did not reach a high state of excellence until a late date in the history of the art, and indeed it is only in very recent times that the products of English pottery have been at all comparable with those of other lands. We had nothing to offer that could be compared with Italian majolica or with the porcelain ware of French production until quite recently. English pottery produced in the Staffordshire Potteries or other pot works until the beginning of the eighteenth century consisted of scarcely more than coarse stoneware, and it was not until the advent of Josiah Wedgwood that English pottery as an important artistic product came into being. Wedgwood set himself to imitate the severe beauty of the Greek artists, and in this he was aided by Flaxman. Some of the cameo ware of Wedgwood is of exquisite beauty, and the technique of all of it is marvellously fine. It has often been imitated, but none of the imitations, either foreign or English, have approached the excellence of the work which was produced under Josiah Wedgwood's own supervision. We have no other great name in this branch of the art, although some of the productions of Sir Henry Doulton's Works, at Lambeth, and the work of Mr. William de Morgan, of Chelsea, may be regarded as excellent examples of modern pottery.

Porcelain in England can show a better record in the china of the Chelsea Factories, which were at their greatest period in the middle of the eighteenth century, and it was owing to the importations of English china into France, that the Sèvres Works were originated. The porcelain produced at the works at Bow also became celebrated, but on the failure of their proprietor these works were removed to Derby by William Duesbury, who was also the owner of the celebrated Derby Porcelain Works. The celebrated Worcester China Works were originated by Dr. Wall, who united in his person the faculties of physician, chemist, and artist. Some of the pieces which were produced at Worcester were very fine, but as at Derby, when the practice of printing the designs on the pieces instead of painting them came into

vogue, the artistic excellence of the manufacture steadily decreased.

A special interest attaches to the Bristol Potteries, inasmuch as it was there that the first hard porcelain was made in England from the natural Kaolin or China clay of Devonshire and Cornwall, discovered and first used by William Cookworthy, the Plymouth Potter. This was the foundation of the enormous English pottery trade, which is of course focussed in North Staffordshire at Stoke, Hanley, Burslem, Dresden and other places called, collectively, "The Potteries," and perhaps as dreary a spot as any to be found throughout our country. Anyone who has travelled in the neighbourhood of Dartmoor will have noticed the milky appearance of many of the streams and rivers. This is owing to the decomposition of the felspar, an ingredient of, the granite which exists in such enormous masses in this region. This decomposition results in the natural production of Kaolin. This is found in large deposits as beds or layers at the side of the streams. So far these beds have proved inexhaustible, and have been worked for a hundred years without failing. The Kaolin is removed and taken to Staffordshire, and we can only congratulate ourselves that its transport is cheaper than the transport of coal, or Devonshire might ere this have been despoiled by the dirt and grime of the pot works, as North Staffordshire has already been.

The preliminary process of preparing the clay for the potter's use is not intricate. The natural product is reduced to a fine powder between mill-stones, and is then washed with water to remove all impurities and allowed to settle in troughs. Ground flints are added to the clay for porcelain, and the whole well worked up into a stiff paste. It is then ready for manipulation in the pot works.

In order to study the conditions under which modern pottery is produced, I was fortunate in being able to procure admission to the great works of Minton, Limited, at Stoke-on-Trent, the centre of "The Potteries." These enormous works have been established for more than a hundred years, and within their walls more than seventeen hundred workpeople of both sexes are engaged. Here a large proportion of the domestic pottery for the home and foreign trade is produced, and tea cups and saucers and plates and dishes in all sorts and sizes, states and conditions, exist in profusion

A walk round the show-room before entering the works itself gives one an idea of the extent of the industry, although here for the most part only examples of the finer kinds of ware are to be found, and the humble dinner-service of commerce is relegated to the stock-room probably, for it is not apparent among the more gorgeous specimens of the potter's art. This collection embraces many varieties, and reproductions of old Dresden are to be seen in close proximity to the newest shapes and designs but lately come from the ovens. Majolica and porcelain are mingled, and in some cases combined, and the "pâte sur pâte" ware, which is associated with Messrs. Minton, and more so with the name of M. Louis Solon, its modern exponent, is a very striking feature in the exhibition.

This beautiful production of the potter's art is not made without the utmost care, and each piece bears the impress of M. Solon's touch. Great vases are, for the most part, the subject upon which the artist works, and the exquisite cameo-like modellings upon them are produced by a process half modelling half painting, the medium being the finest china clay in a liquid state. I was admitted to M. Solon's studio, and saw him at work. The vase is placed upon a small revolving table, and the artist having outlined his design upon it proceeds to apply the liquid china clay with a small camel-hair brush. This quickly dries, and a further coat is placed over it, and this process is repeated until the desired relief is obtained and the desired modelling accomplished. Hence the name "pâte sur pâte," paste upon paste, in layers of infinite thinness, which are only effective,

however, by their very tenuity, which in time bring so graceful and charming an effect. Generally this decoration takes the form of figures, chiefly human, and some of the subjects are delightfully fresh and pleasing. When the process of paste-painting has been accomplished the vase is fired, and the paste

of the design fuses and resolves itself into a beautiful semi-transparent opaline mass which is very graceful. These examples of M. Solon's "pâte sur pâte" are now known all over the world where beautiful pottery is appreciated, and will undoubtedly

be sought after by collectors when we are no more, and the existence of the Staffordshire potteries but a matter of history.

Leaving the show-room in charge of a foreman, the actual works are reached after passing through a yard, where heaps

of broken pots, called "sherd-wrecks," are waiting to be carted away. In the first room is being conducted the process of throwing, by means of the potter's wheel. It is a fascinating performance, and the plasticity of the clay on the wheel and in the hands of the potter brings home to one, in the most forcible manner, the Biblical simile on this subject. The wheel revolves rapidly, and is driven by steam power, and the workman can regulate the speed with his foot by means of a lever. While the wheel is revolving, he takes a lump of the moist clay, of the required size, which has

been placed to his hand by a woman attendant, and throws it upon the wheel. With moist hands surrounding it the mass rises into shape as it rapidly revolves, and the deft fingers of the potter have produced a vase or a rudimentary teacup before one has had time to realise what is



VASE.

going on. The next process is that of turning. The piece from the throwing room is placed upon the chuck of a lathe worked by a woman, who regulates the speed or reverses the action as it



VASE.

becomes necessary, while the turner is engaged in his work. He smooths the surface of the clay and removes all excrescences. After being thus dealt with the pieces are carried to a room where boys are engaged in stamping handles for cups and jugs and spouts out of plaster-of-Paris moulds. These handles and spouts are attached with a little moist clay to the body of the piece, and little leaves, also stamped in moulds, placed at the base of the handle as an ornament.

From the moulding of handles and spouts we pass to the moulding of plates and dishes in the next department. Here we find great plaster-of-Paris beds or blocks with flat surfaces, upon which a mass of clay is laid to be beaten out in a flat layer, by means of a batt or beater. A large knife is then drawn across the surface of the clay, which tends to keep it from cracking in the later stage of drying, and then the layer is deftly lifted upon the mould. With wet sponges the workman then presses the clay upon the mould, which revolves easily to facilitate manipulation. The clay is then left until it loses

sufficient moisture to allow of its being removed from the mould.

In another room another kind of moulding called piece-moulding is being carried on. This is done when large moulded vases or pot-dogs or pot-birds, which are common enough in shops where "crock" are sold, have to be made, and then the various pieces built up together and welded with clay. Some of these operations are very ingenious, but they do not possess the fascination of the throwing process. The next department to be visited is the drying room, where thousands of pieces of pottery in the "green" state may be seen. They remain here for two or three days, and the object of this gradual process, by which the pieces part with a considerable amount of water, is to keep them from splitting or cracking when they are placed in the ovens. This is the next process in the series. The pieces are all placed in the stoneware receptacles called "saggars," and loose sand is distributed between them to keep them from sticking. The saggars are then piled up in tiers or "bungs" in the cold oven until the oven is quite full. It is then built up, and the firing commences and continues for sixty hours. They are allowed to cool, which takes another hundred hours, and they are then



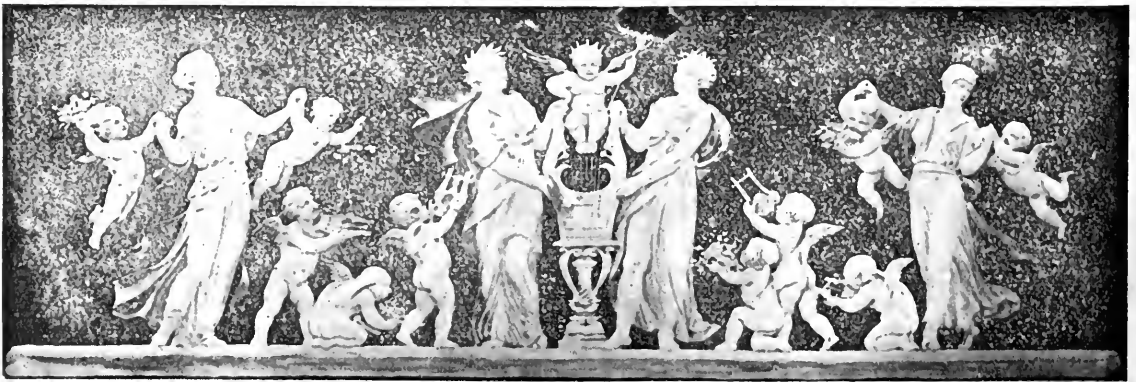
VASE.

in what is called the biscuit state. They are quite hard, but porous, and it is while they are thus that the decoration is applied.

For the cheaper kinds of ware the decoration has to consist of the printing of the design, which is accomplished in the following way. The design is first engraved on a copper plate, which is, to all intents and purposes, the same as an etched plate for a picture. The plate is charged with a composition of oil and colour in a raw state, and tissue paper, prepared with a solution of soft soap, is used for taking the impressions. An ordinary hand-etching printing press is used, and the impressions as they are taken are handed by the printer to a girl who skilfully transfers them to the ware. The porous nature of the piece absorbs the colour in a few moments. When it has dried the article is immersed in water, and the paper washed off. The article so treated is then passed on to the next department, where the glazing is accomplished. Here the plate or cup or dish is placed for a few seconds in the glazing solution, which is contained in a bath. The operator moves it rapidly, runs all the superfluous solution off, and places the article on one side. The design is now almost obliterated by the opaque solution, which consists largely of lead salts. It now goes on to the second firing. But before passing to this process, the rooms where the gilding and the painting of the more expensive pieces is being done are visited. The painting is done in some cases for the sake of cheapness by transferring the design in outline, and then working in the details with brush and colour. In the more artistic pieces, however, the pieces are not decorated by mechanical means at all, but purely with pencil and brush. The colours used are called tar-colours, and, as will be understood, are not the same colours when freshly painted on as they appear after the pieces have been glazed and fired. For instance, the gilding material colour painted on the piece in the biscuit

state, which has previously had a ground of colour laid on, is of a dull brown hue. When it has been fired it becomes yellow, but still without any brightness. It is then either burnished by means of a very hard stone burnisher, if a bright gilt is required, or scoured with sand if a dull gold is the requirement.

When all these things have been seen, we return to the ovens, where the second firing is to take place. Here we find the pieces are again placed in saggars, but now that they are glazed every piece has to be carefully separated from its fellow, and this isolation is accomplished by means of a variety of small contrivances made of clay. The saggars are rendered air-tight by rolls of soft clay placed on their edges, upon which the lids or covers fit. As before, the great piles of saggars are placed in the ovens till they are quite full, and the whole sealed up. This firing occupies about twenty-four hours, and the fireman, who has to be a very experienced and intelligent man, is enabled to tell how the firing progresses by means of a number of small "tests" as they are called. These are small sections of pipe about an inch in diameter and half an inch in length, made of red clay and glazed. A series of these are placed in the kiln so that they may easily be taken out on a long iron rod. The fireman takes one out occasionally, and by his experience is able to judge when the time for decreasing the heat of the furnace has come. After the second heating, the cooling occupies about sixty hours, and when that is accomplished, the pieces, if the firing has been successful, are practically fit for use. The glaze has been fused and become glass and transparent, and the design or printing, which before was obscured by it, now appears beneath it in the colours which were intended by its designers.



## \* THE OLDEST WATERING-PLACE IN THE WORLD.

BY E. D. BERRY.

THE oldest watering-place in the world is within a five hours' carriage drive from Rome, and is situated on the Lake of Bracciano, celebrated for the castle which bears its name, and now the property of the Odescalchi family. Close to the castle is a little hamlet, called Vicarello, supposed to have taken its name from Vicus Aurelii, and remarkable for the ruins of an Imperial Villa, attributed to Trajan. It is also known for its mineral waters, once called *Aquæ Auraliæ*, but now called by their primitive name of *Aquæ Apollinaræ*, of the Antonine Itinerary.

It was not till the year 1852 that the real name of the waters was known; and this is how it took place:—Some workmen were employed in excavating the ground for the foundations of a new establishment, when they came upon a reservoir, full of mineral waters, which were covered by a vault of Etruscan workmanship. This vault was immediately removed, and the water pumped out. This done, it was observed that the bottom of the reservoir was occupied by a dense mass of gold, silver, bronze, and other metallic coins, etc. Fortunately, every precaution was taken to remove these coins, etc., in the order they were found; and upwards of a ton in weight of these coins, etc., were thus extracted. The upper layer consisted of coins bearing the effigy of the Roman emperors up to Trajan; under these came more ancient types of coins; and underneath these came those massive coins known as *æs grave signatum*. Finally came a stratum of *æs rude*, a kind of copper dice, such as were first used as exchange in the beginning of the history of money; and the place occupied by the *æs rude* gave evidence of an epoch prior to the first civilisation of Etruria. I must add that, even under this most ancient layer of *æs rude*, there were still earlier votive offerings in the form of flint implements.

Here then was a Bathing Establishment dating back to centuries before the foundation of Rome; and the baths still in so perfect a state that not one of their offerings had been displaced.

These successive deposits of coins and other objects represented the offerings of those who drank, or those who bathed in the waters. They were called *stipæ*, and were offered as much to solicit the naiads for recovery as to thank them after recovery. During the Emperor Augustus' illness, every order of the people threw *stipæ* yearly in the Curtius Lake, to beseech for Augustus' health ("Omnes ordines in lacum Curtii quotannus pro salute ejus stipem jaciebant").

In Egypt *stipæ* were thrown into the Nile. Pliny the younger also tells us that *stipæ* were thrown into the River Cliturnus, and these deposits being considered sacred, no one dared touch them, though they could even have been counted at the bottom of the water, it was so limpid ("flumen adeo vitreum ut numerare jactus stipes possis").

These *ex-voto*, however, did not consist solely of medals and coins—vases, cups, and goblets were also found in the Vicarello Reservoir. Many of them bore designs upon them, others merely inscriptions. On one of the most beautiful of these we see written: "Apollini G. Cassius januarius." It was Apollo, therefore, who presided at these springs. Also on a marble column were seen the Greek letters for "Apollo."

Here, then, were the celebrated *Aquæ Apollinariæ* of the Antonine Itinerary, which were known to have existed in Southern Etruria, about thirty miles from Rome, but no one had known exactly where until these excavations in Vicarello, in 1852.

All the interesting objects found here may now be seen in the Kircherian Museum of Rome. Some of the gold vases, however, are in the Vatican Library. The most interesting objects amongst those in the Kircherian Museum are four round silver vases, on which are written the places passed by visitors to these baths from Cadiz to Rome. On each is written: "Itinerary from Cadiz to Rome." They belonged, no doubt, to rich visitors, attracted from Spain hither by the reputation of these Apollinaris Waters.

Here is one of these itineraries:—"Cadiz, Cordova, Valentia, Legonta, Taragon, Narbonne,

\* Since this paper was written a railroad has been opened to Bracciano, within half-an-hour's walk from Vicarello.



Nismes, Embrun, Briançon, Susa, Turin, Pavia, Piacenza, Parma, Reggio, Modena, Bologna, Faenza, Forlì, Cesena, Rimini, Pesaro, Fano, Nocera, Otricoli, Rome." In all 1,840 Roman miles.

The numbers of goblets found in this Reservoir prove that the waters were drunk as well as bathed in, as they are now. In fact they are bright and sparkling, and have an agreeable tart taste. They are excellent against dyspepsia, neuralgia, sciatica, gout, rheumatism, and paralysis. They contain salts of soda and lime.

A clever speculator, I think, might make a good profit by introducing these "oldest known mineral waters" to English dinner tables, for they keep perfectly well.

Lake Bracciano, on which Vicarello, with its *Aque Apollinariæ* Establishment, is situated, is a beautiful sheet of water. It was the *Lacus Sabatinus* of the ancients, and derived its name from the Etruscan City of Sabate, supposed to have been submerged under its waters.

The town of Bracciano itself is of little interest though it does style itself the "Capital of the Maremma." Its Baronial Castle, however, is very interesting. It was built by the Orsini family, in the 15th century. It now belongs to the Odescalchi family. There is not in all Europe, perhaps, a more perfect realization of baronial times than this Castle of Bracciano. It seems to have been made for scenes of romance. It was one of the first places round Rome which Sir Walter Scott, when here, desired to see.

With good horses, Bracciano and Vicarello may be seen in a single day, and I think they deserve a visit quite as much as Tivoli, Albano, etc., if not more.

On the road we pass *Ponta Molle*, celebrated for Constantine's defeat over Maxentius, who was hurled into the river with his spoils—amongst which legend includes the seven-branched candelabrum. But there is no real authority for this. On the contrary, Procopius states positively that it was carried from Rome to Carthage, by Generic, in 455 A.D.

We also pass the celebrated *Villa Cæsarum* ad *Gallinas Albas*, founded by Livia, on one of her paternal estates. It was first called *Villa Veientina* from being in the *Veii* territory. It changed its name to *Villa Cæsarum* ad *Gallinas Albas* from the legend that an eagle, flying over it, let fall a

white fowl (*gallina alba*) which, alighting on Livia's lap, holding a laurel branch in its beak, was the progenitrix of that race of birds for which it became so renowned, as also were the laurel berries of the plantations of laurels, from which the Imperial conquerors were afterwards crowned. We are also told that, at the extinction of the Julian line, these white fowls began to die, and the laurels to wither, and that both disappeared with the last of Augustus's descendants. A lovely view is still seen from this Villa.

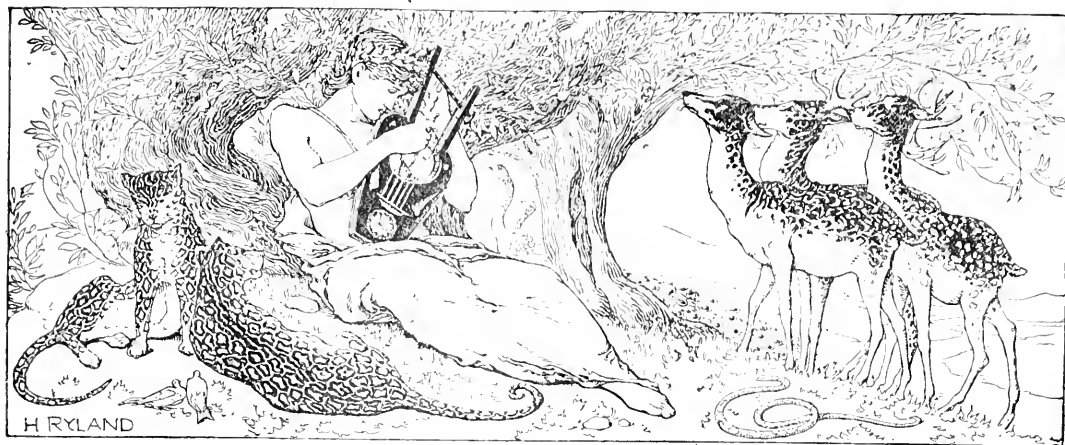
And here we are at Vicarello and the *Aque Apollinariæ* once more. The present establishment is open June, July, and August. The patients are divided into two classes, at prices from ten to fifteen shillings a day, baths included. Each patient, however, provides his own bed and bath linen. A cafe, buffet, billiards, reading, music, and conversation rooms are open freely to the visitors. Two doctors are attached to the establishment, and the strictest discipline is enforced. You must rise at a certain hour, bathe, breakfast, rest, walk, dine, read, amuse yourself, all at certain hours, fixed by the medical arrangements of the place.

It is not a watering-place *pour rire*, I assure you. It is in earnest, very much in earnest, on the contrary. But then, you have your reward at the end—for, however rheumatic, gouty, or otherwise afflicted you may be on entering the establishment, when you leave it you are another man. Also, it is always full, and it is very difficult to obtain a bed unless you apply for it long before the opening of the establishment.

As I have told you, it is situated on the Lake of Bracciano, and it is surrounded by woods, vineyards, and fields. The walks around are cool and shady, even in the height of summer. Daily drives can be taken to the surrounding towns and castles, weather—and doctors—permitting. I once spent a whole summer there, and never enjoyed my life so much. The sylvan solitude of the place quite enchanted me.

It was something to dream of also—the knowledge that I was bathing in waters in which Roman Emperors had bathed, and men who had lived ages before Rome was founded, aye, ages before Etruria herself had carried her civilization thus far South: that is, in the "oldest watering-place in the world" still in existence!





## Lullaby.

Words by A. H. JAPP, LL.D

Music by BARRY WALLER.

VOICE.

*Andantino, con tenerezza.*

*pp*

Ba - loo, bairn - ie,

PIANO.

*pp dolce.*

*pp*

*Ped.*

Hush - a - bye an' sleep ;      Wi' your lit - tle    blue eye Nae mair blink an' peep ;



*LULLABY.*

*p*

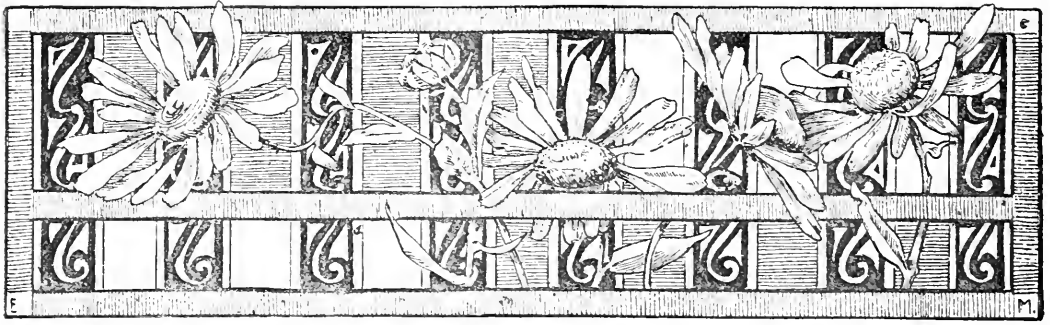
Soft, soft the win' noo, Ba - loo, ba-loo, Gang..... ye soft tae rest; Sleep

*pp*

*pp*

..... on mammy's breast; Ba - loo, ba - loo, Love..... and sleep are best.

[illegible]



## WHITE TURRETS.

AN OUTLINE.

BY MRS. MOLESWORTH,

*Author of "Carrots"; "The Palace in the Garden"; "A Charge Fulfilled";  
"The Red Grange"; "Studies and Stories," etc., etc.*

### CHAPTER VI. (*continued*).

"It is right they should be paid," said Miss Maryon, quickly. "I have thought a good deal about that. I don't believe in unpaid work."

"I should be very sorry to make such a sweeping assertion," said Hertha, with a smile. "However, in this case, the question is not raised. You *will* be paid—£50 a year to begin, and the prospect of an increase, if all goes well. But remember," as she caught sight of a bright gleam of satisfaction lighting up Winifred's face, "£50 are not a fortune. You are very inexperienced. I daresay it seems a great deal to you, but it won't go very far."

"I am not so inexperienced as you think, dear Miss Norreys," said Winifred, quietly. "I shall be able to manage, and to have Celia with me before long. It is not the money, but the feeling that it is a *beginning*, something really to do, and that I shall take the greatest interest in. There is nothing I have more at heart than the problem of how to help without pauperising our lower classes. I may be of more use to the Reasonable Aid Society than would be thought likely," she concluded, with a funny little touch of self-assertion.

"I hope so, I am sure—and with all my heart I hope the Reasonable Aid Society will be of use to you. Then you decide on accepting it?—that is to say, on offering yourself as a candidate for the post?"

"Oh dear, yes. Most certainly I do," said Winifred. "And I thank you a thousand times."

"It was much more Mr. Montague's doing than

mine," said Hertha. "And, indeed, the whole thing was a chance—a lucky one, I trust."

"And can you tell me when I must call at the office, or must I write, or what?" asked Winifred.

"Yes," Miss Norreys replied. "Mr. Montague sent full particulars. You must call any morning, but the sooner the better, at this address," and she held out a paper.

"I will go to-morrow," said Winifred.

"And if you say that you have no home in London, the secretary will give you a list of lodgings where some of their employées live. Nothing very grand, of course, plain, but not uncomfortable, with thoroughly respectable people."

"Oh that will be all right," said Winifred. "I will find something to begin with, I daresay, and if I don't like it, I can easily move."

Her tone made Hertha rather uneasy again.

"But all moves are expensive," she said. "Try to settle down if possible."

"Ah well, yes, if I can get rooms for Celia, too."

"Rooms," thought Hertha. "What does she expect? But she must buy experience, I suppose."

So after detailing to her some more of the information received from Mr. Montague, she let her go, without volunteering further advice.

And Winifred, feeling that she had taken the first plunge into independence and "a career," bade her new friend good-bye for the present, with many times repeated expressions of gratitude.

## CHAPTER VII.

## AT WHITE TURRETS.

A CLEAR, mild, late-autumn morning in the country—clear, though the sunshine, what there is of it, is thin and pallid, mild, yet with a certain slow chill in the air, which is not inspiriting—over and through and behind all, the indescribable autumn feeling: the subdued consciousness of warmth and brightness past, as distinct as is age from youth, from the equally indescribable hopefulness of even the least genial spring time.

Yet there is no need to remind anyone of the charm of such a day, at such a season. Perhaps there is none, amidst the many fascinations of our ever-the-same yet ever-varying journey through space, more powerful, more irresistible, than the fascination of the fall of the year. As a rule, it is the young who love autumn best: they can afford to enjoy its subdued vitality as a contrast to their own overflowing life. The old, or the growing old, on the contrary, forget sometimes their own failing powers in the delightful exhilaration of reviving nature around them in the songs of the birds and the blossoming of the buds, in the new life which, to many, one would hope, tells of deeper truths than lie on the surface.

A girl was standing by a window—an open window, so mild was the morning—overlooking a gravelled terrace walk. She was fairly tall, brown haired, and gentle-eyed. Not as lovely as her sister Celia, scarcely perhaps as handsome, strictly speaking, as Winifred, the eldest of the three, yet with an undeniable charm of her own—a very gracious presence. For this was Louise, the second of the Maryon daughters.

And all about her seemed harmonious. The simple yet stately room, with the ancient white wainscoting, so rare in an English country house, the perfect, though old-fashioned, appointments of the breakfast table behind her: above all, perhaps, the scene from the window—the broad terrace with the miniature ramparts, and the stiff, quaint flower beds beneath; and the park beyond, fading into dark masses of trees in the distance.

But Louise Maryon was not looking out, her eyes were fixed on a letter in her hand. And as the door opened quietly she looked up with eagerness:

"They are coming, mamma," she exclaimed, joyfully. "They are really coming to-night. Winifred's mysterious business is settled at last, Celia says. Isn't it delightful that we shall have them really back to-day? But"—as a glance shewed her that her mother, too, held a letter in her hand, and that her face scarcely reflected the pleasure Louise herself was feeling—"have you heard, too? Is your letter from Winifred?"

"Yes, dear," Mrs. Maryon replied, with a little sigh. "It is from Winifred. Your father was awake early, so the bag was brought upstairs—you found yours on the table? I sent it down. Yes, mine is from Winifred. Of course I am delighted they are really coming, but, Louise, I am afraid the experiment of this visit to London has done no good. Your sister is evidently as determined as ever."

Louise's face fell a little, more perhaps out of sympathy with her mother's disappointment than from any keen sense of it herself. She had not expected otherwise.

"Celia seems to me to be in a most reasonable frame of mind," she said. "Nothing could be sweeter and nicer than all she says."

"Celia is different," said the mother. "There is sense and reason in her wish to cultivate the talent she believes she has, or at least to find out how much she has. She would never have been unreasonable if Winifred had not put it into her head," and Mrs. Maryon sighed again.

She was more like her eldest daughter in appearance—the slight tall figures and fairer complexions of the younger girls were from their father's side. Yet, in character, Winifred more resembled Mr. Maryon, though the long chastening of delicate health—since a terrible accident some years before—had so mellowed and refined an originally self-willed and almost despotic nature that papa's "gentleness" and well-nigh womanly consideration for others were household words in the family. The mother, full of intelligence and good sense, was, nevertheless, constitutionally timid and even shy. So, between Mr. Maryon's fear of his own natural imperiousness, and his wife's almost morbid want of self-assertion, the clever, precocious child had developed into the self-willed, self-opinionated, though always candid and high-principled, girl.

In the case of the other sisters, no bad results

appeared to have followed their rather exceptional up-bringing. Louise was essentially well-balanced and unselfish; Celia too talented to be self-engrossed. She lived in a world where self is quickly lost sight of, though her great capacity for affection kept her from losing touch with the real people and the real life around her.

Louise, as she took her place at the breakfast table, tried to think of what she could say to cheer her mother.

"I suppose Winifred must judge for herself, mamma," she said. "You have always said so, and, after all, even if she is away from home for a few months, she may settle down all the better afterwards."

"I doubt it," said Mrs. Maryon. "Once she has tasted the sweets of independence, and a more exciting life, I doubt if she will ever 'settle down,' as you say, unless she married, and of that—at least of *the* marriage we hoped for—I suppose there is no chance now."

"I am very sorry for Lennox," said Louise, simply. "But for his sake, her being away for a while may be better. I think he is accepting the thing—but still, her being away, *would* make it easier. And then he need not leave off coming about us as usual. We should miss him, and it would be hard upon him, for he is rather lonely,"

"It has been hard upon him already. Yes, if I could think Winifred would have enough of it in a while, as you say, Louise! But she seems already to have got one foot into that half Bohemian society she has always been longing for. I cannot think how she has managed it from so solid a house as the Baldersons! Her letter is full of some singer—a Miss Norreys—whom she has taken a perfect 'furore' for, and who she says has been most kind in helping her. Really, as if the child were a poor little governess! And to think of all the responsibilities awaiting her here—of all that must be hers some day! No, I cannot see how Winifred can blind herself to the duties so distinctly hers. And she will fall more and more out of it all. She will know nothing about the property or its management."

"But, mamma dear, we may hope that papa will live a great many years. He is no worse than ten years ago. And Winifred may fall in love and marry some day. It would do her all the good in the world," said Louise.

"Some actor or singer, perhaps," said her mother. "I should be thankful she has no taste for the stage, and no special musical talent, for there is no knowing what she might not have wished to do in such a case."

"The Baldersons are very musical. I suppose that is how Winifred has met Miss Norreys. Celia speaks of her, too. She says she is really quite charming, and that Winifred can get nothing but good from her. But what it is that she is 'helping' Winifred about, Celia does not say."

"I wish we could see her—this Miss Norreys, I mean," said Mrs. Maryon. "She seems to be acquiring so much influence over Winifred."

"I have heard her name, I am sure," said Louise. "Well, any way, mother dear, we shall know all about it in a few hours. So try not to worry in the meantime. Shall I go up to papa now? Will he be ready for me?"

For to a great extent Louise acted as her father's secretary, and the post was no sinecure.

"Mr. Peckerton is coming this afternoon," said Mrs. Maryon, "and that always tires your father. Make him do as little as possible beforehand. Perhaps you had better run up to him now and talk the day over. I shall be busy, too—the vicar is coming about the new school-mistress."

"And there are all the Christmas presents for the children, to go over," said Louise. "I am thankful Celia is coming back."

The journey from London was not a very long one. Late in the season as it was, the sun had not yet set when Winifred and Celia found themselves steaming into their own station, where a carriage and a pencilled note from Louise awaited them.

"I have been longing to go to meet you, but find I cannot manage it, as Mr. Peckerton is here and papa needs me. So delightful to know you are coming home."

"Dear me," said Winifred, when she and Celia were comfortably settled in the carriage, and bowling away quickly on the smooth high road to White Turrets, "dear me, what a 'Little Peddling-ton' life it will seem after London! Poor Louise, as full of her accounts and village matters and old women's flannel petticoats as ever, I suppose!"

Celia did not reply. Winifred's tone jarred upon her. She was gazing out of the window at the reddening sky, just where the sun was setting.

It was a lovely evening, and her whole feelings were touched and quickened by the returning home. A moment or two later they drove in at their own lodge, and then a turn in the avenue—a grand old avenue, bordered by trees which had lived through more than one or two human generations—brought them, while still at some distance, within view of the house itself.

It could scarcely have been seen to greater advantage than standing out as it did against the autumn sky, with the sunset glow illuminating the clouds, banked up, blue grey and cold looking, near the horizon, though overhead the pearly, neutral-tinted expanse, already shadowing into darker tones, still told of the mildness and calm of the fast-waning day.

"Look, Winifred, look," cried the younger girl, "did you ever see the house more picturesque? It has that wonderful old-world look—the 'fairy-story look,' I used to call it when I was little. It is as pure white as if it had just sprung up by magic, and yet it seems as if it might have been standing there for thousands of years—as if the White Cat had just ridden off from the door on a hunting-party."

"Or as if the Sleeping Beauty were sleeping there still, waiting for the perfect prince, who never comes except in your fairy tales, Celia," said Winifred, with a touch of contempt in her tone. But the fancy did not displease her sister. She only laughed softly.

"Well, *we* don't waste much thought on him," she said. "Dear old White Turrets! I do love it. It doesn't need a prince, Winifred. You know it has always prospered best in the hands of a woman."

Winifred's face clouded.

"I wish you would forget that old nonsense," she said. "There are women and women—no one will understand that. It may suit some women to drone along and never leave their own village, but it wouldn't suit *me*, and that is all that I am concerned about."

Celia sighed, but her sigh was not a very profound one. She was feeling too happy for that.

"If I could only get up and down to London for painting lessons every day by magic," she said, "I should never want to leave home at all—never."

"Nonsense, Celia," said Winifred. "You would

never do anything worth doing if you tied yourself to the out-of-the-world sort of life we have here. You need to imbibe the spirit of the day. You need friction, a hundred inspiring and inspiriting influences, even if you *are* a genius."

"Winifred," said the younger girl, reproachfully, "how can you speak so? Heaven knows I have never thought myself a genius. Still—I daresay there is something in what you say. Certainly I need to test myself with others, if that is what you mean by friction. But oh! here we are—and there is dear old Louise, looking just as she did the day we left, only a good deal happier."

"Poor dear Louise," repeated Winifred. "Yes, she is the modern incarnation of one of Miss Austen's heroines. But it *is* nice to see her again."

And the greetings between the three sisters could not have been more affectionate and loving than they were.

It was not till much later that evening that Louise got Celia to herself for a good talk. At dinner, with both the father and mother present, the conversation had been bright and full of interest, Winifred describing, with her ready flow of language, what she and her sister had seen and done and been struck by in London, and Celia contributing her quota. Questions about the Baldersons, too, were asked and answered, and a casual observer would have imagined the family "understanding" to have been perfect.

But below it all, the five themselves were conscious of a certain constraint: something was smouldering beneath the surface, and Mrs. Maryon's face, when in repose, showed lines of fresh anxiety and troubled anticipation.

"I won't keep you up to-night, my dear mother," said Winifred, as bed-time approached—Mr. Maryon, feeling the effects of the afternoon's business with Mr. Peckerton, having already been wheeled away in his invalid chair. "You look tired, and I want to write a letter in my own room for the first post in the morning. But to-morrow we must have a regular good talk, and you shall hear everything there is to tell."

"Celia," said Louise, when the two younger sisters were by themselves in Celia's room, "I mustn't keep you up long, for you look rather tired, too. But do tell me—what has Winifred to say? What has she been doing, or what is she

going to do? Of course you could not tell much in your letters—we settled that before you left—and when Lennox saw you, you had only just arrived there. But I am so anxious to know everything, for several reasons.”

“Was Lennox in very low spirits when he came back?” asked Celia, in the first place, instead of answering Louise. “That’s *one* thing settled. It’s as certain as anything can be that he need never *dream* of Winifred. I have come not to wish it. She is too prejudiced to do him justice.”

“I think so too,” said Louise. “It is only for papa’s and mamma’s sake I regret it now. No, he was not low-spirited. He has made up his mind to it, I think. And”—she hesitated—“he even laughs a little at Winifred sometimes.”

Celia’s colour rose.

“That is very presumptuous of him,” she said, but she checked herself. “Of course he can’t understand her, so perhaps it is a good thing if he takes that line. She has quite decided, Louise. It is all settled. She is going to London in January, for good.”

Louise drew a deep breath.

“I cannot believe it,” she said. “Leaving all she might do here, when every day I see more and more how valuable her strong brain and clear judgment would be. For papa, though not worse, is not *better*, Celia. He is so quickly exhausted. I do my best, but I am *not* the clever one of the family. I can’t understand it. Going out to seek for work when it is at her very feet, crying to be done.”

“It is not work Winifred wants, it is a career,” said Celia, laconically.

“But she has no special gift—no—no ‘vocation’ to anything in particular,” said Louise.

“She thinks it is her vocation to show that women should be as free as men,” said Celia. “She is full of organised benevolent work just now, and she wants to prove that women can do it as well as—no, far better than men. But I have tacitly promised her to let her tell all particulars herself, so I better not say any more.”

“Only one thing—this Miss—Miss something Norreys, that Winifred has mentioned so enthusiastically in her letters—has she influenced her?” asked Louise.

“She is the best friend Winifred could have,” Celia replied. “She is beautiful and talented

and good. Yes, and wise too. But—I have not seen her much. I doubt if she really understands the position.”

There was a little silence. Then Louise spoke again.

“Celia,” she said, with a touch of hesitation, *you* have changed a little—or a great deal? You don’t look at things so entirely from Winifred’s point of view, do you?”

“No,” said Celia, frankly, “I don’t. I have changed. I hope perhaps I have grown wiser, that I have learnt to see things outside ourselves more than I did. *Winifred* would tell you it was all the other way,” she added, with a smile. “*She* thinks I have grown narrow and conventional.”

“But you haven’t changed about yourself—about your wish to see what talent you have—to test yourself, as you say?” asked Louise, eagerly. “I should not like that.”

“No, I feel just the same. I feel that I *must* try; that is to say, unless some very clear overmastering question of duty interferes. I know I have some talent, and even if it is nothing remarkable I think I should cultivate it, and if”—here the girl’s voice trembled a little—“if it *were* to be remarkable—well, all the more reason for developing it.”

“Yes. You are right. I know you are,” said Louise. “I am so glad. But then it is about Winifred you have changed?”

“Not exactly—or rather, it is about Winifred, as a type of so many girls now-a-days. I cannot go as far as she does, and yet you see the position is very invidious. It makes *me* seem selfish and presumptuous and—almost conceited,” and Celia’s face clouded over. “A very little thing began the change in me,” she went on. “An almost chance remark of Eric Balderson’s. Then I tried to think it out, and I wondered at myself for having agreed with Winifred as I did. For her case is a peculiarly strong one the *other* way, I now see. Her life is before her. It is not like that of some women who have reason to feel hedged in and stunted, even though I am beginning to think that very often it is their own fault. I am afraid a good deal comes from love of excitement, though, *of course*, there is the other side of it, too. But it it would take hours to tell you all I have been thinking.”

“And I have kept you up too long already,



dear," said Louise. "Only—Celia, I must tell you one thing—the White Weeper has been seen again."

Celia started, and grew white herself.

"Oh Louise," she said, "I wish you hadn't told me to-night. You don't mind, I know, but——"

"Celia, dearest, I'm so sorry," said Louise, penitently. "I never knew you minded it either. I was, in a way, glad of it. I fancied it might have some effect on Winifred, even though she only mocks at it. It *is* curious, for it is a good while since it has been seen. And even if it is only some peculiar shadow, some atmospheric effect, as people try to make out, still—its being seen just now might make Winifred think."

Celia shook her head.

"She would not allow it, even if it did," she said. "It's no good telling her about it. She only gets very cross. When," and again she trembled a little, "when was it seen, and by whom, and where?"

"Twice," said Louise, "just as usual. In the yew-tree avenue. Barbara saw it, the first time, and then one of the gardeners—the new one, quite a young man. It is always new-comers who see it. And none of the people about know of it, except Barbara and Horton, and one or two of the very old ones, who *never* speak of it. Luckily the young man told Horton of it first, and Horton bound him over not to speak of it. He told him he would be laughed at, and so he would."

"How long ago?" asked Celia.

"Last week. She, or it, was crying quietly, Barbara said. Not violently. So Barbara took it as just a gentle warning—not any very dreadful thing. She is quite satisfied that it was for Winifred."

"I wish Winifred could see it for herself," said Celia, with a little not unnatural irritation. She was feeling both tired and frightened. "Louise, you will leave the door wide open between our rooms. I can't understand your not being frightened."

"Well, any way, dear, you know it *never* comes into the house," said Louise, reassuringly.

"It never has that we know of," said Celia, "but still if it were much provoked or defied. No, no, Louise, don't tell Winifred about it. I should be afraid what she might say or do, for she is never frightened of anything."

Louise looked greatly distressed.

"Dear Celia," she said, "I wish you wouldn't take it that way. I feel quite differently about it. I look upon the white weeper as a kind of protector—a living spirit who wants to keep harm from us."

"Do you?" said Celia, rather grimly. "Well then, I'm afraid I'm like the boy who, when he was told he need not mind the dark, as his guardian angel was always beside him, replied that that was just what he was 'afear'd on.' I don't know if I've a bad conscience—compared with *yours*, I daresay I have—but I know that I devoutly trust I shall never be favoured with the sight of our family ghost. Do you mean to say, Louise, that you would have courage to speak to her?"

Louise hesitated.

"I don't know," she said, "I hope I would. Yes, I think I would if it was to be for good to any of those I love."

"I do believe you would. *You* are an angel," and she drew Louise's wavy brown head down to her, as the elder girl was turning to leave her, and kissed her tenderly.

The door was left open—wide open—that night between their rooms, but the sisters' slumbers were undisturbed. Louise was too happy to know that Celia was beside her again to think of anything else, even if she had been given to ghostly fears, which she certainly was not.

And Celia was happy too, though tired—happy to be at home again, and to feel that Louise and she understood each other so thoroughly.

The next morning brought about the "long talk" between Winifred and her mother. It was not so very long after all, for the same ground had been gone over so often that there was not much new to say. And when Mrs. Maryon became convinced that the visit to London had only intensified her daughter's determination—had indeed practically resulted in Winifred's taking upon herself engagements which it would have been scarcely honourable to break, she had the wisdom to accept the position, and not to add bitterness to the whole by further and useless discussion.

But though the daughter went singing upstairs to her own quarters, congratulating herself that things had passed off more easily than she had expected, the mother's face looked sadly pained

and anxious when Louise ventured to join her, after making sure that the interview with her elder sister was over.

"May I come in, mamma?" she said. "Tell me—oh dear, you are looking very troubled!"

"Yes, dear, I am feeling so," Mrs. Maryon replied. "Winifred has really carried out her intentions. She has—fancy, Louise—she has engaged herself as some sort of sub-secretary or clerk, to one of these new philanthropic societies. The Reasonable Aid Society, I think she calls it. I daresay it is a very good thing—no doubt it is—and besides helping the poor, I daresay it provides employment for many penniless girls of a better class. But *Winifred*—with her position and responsibilities and the home duties she *could* do so well, if she would—Louise, it is almost incredible."

"It is better than becoming a woman doctor or a hospital nurse, surely," said Louise.

"I don't know. She has no taste for either. But if she had become a hospital nurse it might have brought her to her senses, and at least she would have acquired some useful knowledge."

"So she may, as things are," replied Louise, who, whatever her own feelings, tried determinedly to look on the bright side of things for her mother's sake. "And really, vexing as it is, her pertinacity is rather fine—worthy of a better cause. How clever of her to have got this thing, for I am sure it is difficult, unless the Society is glad to find a girl who gives her services for nothing."

"Oh dear no. It is not even that," said Mrs. Maryon. "She is to have £50 a-year! She does not approve of the *principle* of unpaid labour, she says. She got the offer of this post through this new friend of hers—Miss Norreys. I think Mrs. Balderson should have been more careful whom she introduced to the girls. Miss Norreys must be a very advanced "women's rights" sort of a person."

"Celia says not. She says she is perfectly charming and perfectly womanly," said Louise.

"Then—she cannot have understood all about Winifred. I wish I could see her. I shall certainly not allow Celia to join Winifred in London next spring, without knowing more of this young woman, who seems to have done all the mischief."

"Oh no, mamma. It was done before Winifred

ever saw her. You know we *hoped*—though not very much—that London might have changed Winifred's ideas. If it has to be, Miss Norreys may be a very good friend."

"I should like to see her," Mrs. Maryon repeated. And then she added, with a sigh: "She has accepted this post for January. She will not be much longer at home."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### AN INVITATION AND A JOURNEY.

HERTHA Norreys stood staring at a letter—or letters rather—which she held in her hand, with an air of perplexity and surprise.

"I can't make it out," she said to herself. "It seems so odd and inconsistent. And—I have not done so very much for her after all. They write as if I were in a sense responsible for her, and her dearest friend. I like her. There is a great deal of good in her, but the only real service I have done her since she came to London was getting Mr. Montague to beg her in again that time she was given notice of dismissal for defiance of the Society's rules."

A smile came over Miss Norreys' face at the recollection of the circumstances, and with the letters still in her hand she sat down at her neat breakfast-table. And when she had poured out her coffee and begun to eat, she glanced through them again. They had both come together, one from Winifred enclosing the other, which was from Mrs. Maryon, simply inscribed to Miss Norreys, but without any address.

This was Winifred's:

"Dearest friend," and the words again drew forth a smile from the reader.

"I have just received the enclosed from my mother. It was left open for me to read the contents. I hope you will not mind their asking you in this unceremonious way, though I confess I think they should have left the invitation to *me*. I am afraid you would find it dreadfully dull down there. I am not at all sure if I shall get down myself for Easter, as I scarcely see how I am to be spared here. If I go it will be principally for poor little Celia's sake; though *now* it would of course be yours too, should you possibly care about it. It certainly is very pretty in our part of

the country in the spring. You will let me know what you decide?

Ever yours devotedly,

WINIFRED R. V. MARYON."

The enclosure was a slightly stiff and yet cordial invitation—an invitation which gave one the feeling that the writer had not the slightest doubt of its being at once and eagerly accepted—to Miss Norreys, to spend Easter week at White Turrets.

"You would give us pleasure by doing so," wrote Mrs. Maryon, "and we should be glad to have an opportunity of thanking you for your kindness to my daughter, and of making the acquaintance of one to whom in her present life she looks for advice and direction. And there are several things I should be glad to talk over with you. We expect Winifred at the time I name and you could travel together. I think there are special return tickets issued about Easter, and I hope a little country air would do you good."

Hertha read and re-read. Was there, or was there not, a slight touch of "patronisingness" in the letter? The idea rather amused her.

"It is almost impossible," she said to herself. "Poor and proud" explains it, I suppose. Winifred was delighted to get the fifty pounds salary. I wish they had not asked me, for *any* visitor causes expense when people are so poor, and unaccustomed to that sort of thing. No doubt they think *me* very poor too—poorer than I am now, I am glad to say—the railway fare information is evidently given with that idea."

Then she poured out a second cup of coffee and proceeded with her cogitations.

"I have several invitations for Easter, but without being cynical or suspicious I know that some at least of them, are more for my voice than me. And my voice had much better stay at home or go to sleep. And it would be a rest of its kind to be with a simple country family like that—no dressing to speak of—I need not take a maid. It must be a pretty quaint place too, I fancy. I wonder if 'White Turrets' is the name of a village, or what? It doesn't seem likely that their house would have so important a name, though there are old farm houses in some countries, scarcely more than cottages, with very grand names. I remember—" she glanced at the letter again. "It must be their house or the village, for I see the railway station

and post-town are both different. Dear me—the Maryons are rather extravagant as to note-paper! If one didn't know it was impossible, this might have come from some very big place!"

Then her thoughts reverted to her own plans.

"I should like to see that pretty younger sister again," she thought. "And after all it will not increase any real or imaginary responsibility about Winifred if I come to a clear understanding with her mother. Not that I would shirk responsibility if it were a duty, but in this case it would be a mockery. She is not a girl to be either led or advised, and the reason that I *am* still her dearest friend is that I have—except on that one occasion—left her to buy her own experience. She needs to do so."

The "one occasion" to which Hertha's thoughts referred had been that of a crisis in Winifred's relations with the Society for which she worked. A crisis which at the cost of considerable mortification had left her a wiser woman. For it was only the finish up of a series of annoyances which had begun almost from the first day of her engagement, the cause of which may be summed up in a word—Miss Maryon's absolute ignorance of the meaning of the word obedience.

She was quite sure she knew the best way to manage the work better than those who had been at it for years; she was brimful of eagerness to distinguish herself, and of a *kind* of enthusiasm: she was energetic and hard-working, but she was entirely without deference. And underlying all her talk about the dignity of labour, the contemptibleness of an ordinary woman's home-life, was a strong, though unexpressed belief that she was doing the Society no small honour in working for it, and that, by some instinct which she did not seek to define, the Society should be aware of the fact.

The result of all this can be easily imagined. Though valuable as a steady and zealous worker, she was entirely inexperienced, and want of compliance with the rules was not to be endured.

"We can get scores of girls better fitted for the post at any moment," said the much-worried secretary in reply to Mr. Montague's entreaties that they would give his protégée another trial. And in reality it was far more owing to the skilful pleadings, made in all good faith, of Hertha's friend, as to the importance of the salary

to a girl so placed, the disappointment her dismissal would cause to her friends as well as to herself, than from any conviction of Miss Maryon's special abilities, that the secretary at last gave in.

He knew Mr. Montague well, and his post had given him exceptional opportunities for the cultivation of discernment.

"Are you *sure*," he said, towards the close of the interview, looking up with a keen glance from under his bushy eyebrows, "are you *sure* this girl is really so dependent on her work? There is no story about her that we have not been told, is there? It's no case of a self-willed young woman running away from home—an uncongenial step-mother, or any nonsense exaggerated into importance? She is not a girl to give in, even if in the wrong."

Mr. Montague started.

"What makes you fancy such a thing?" he asked.

The secretary considered.

"I can scarcely say—an impression perhaps. Still there are trifling circumstances—she is very careless about money, thinks nothing of hansom, for instance. And you know one of her great offences has been giving charity without permission, and, naturally, most injudiciously——" he gave an impatient exclamation. "Enough to bring our whole Society into disrepute," he said, "contravening its very *raison d'être*."

Mr. Montague felt uncomfortable, and yet he had no real grounds for misgiving.

"I can only repeat the reason of any interest I feel in her," he said, "and that is that she is a friend of Miss Norreys—the last woman in the world to aid or abet any silly girl in the sort of conduct you suggest."

The secretary's brow cleared.

"True," he said, "I had forgotten."

Mr. Montague called that very day to relate his success to Miss Norreys, but she was not at home. Then he contented himself with a note, merely stating that Winifred was to have another chance, feeling that any further discussion about her would be more satisfactory in speaking than in writing. He tried to see Hertha again, but again failed, and then a summons to an invalid sister at Cairo took him out of England for several weeks, without his meeting Miss Norreys at all.

Mrs. Maryon's invitation was accepted, simply, and with no effusive expressions of gratitude, though with all the kindly acknowledgment that it seemed to Hertha to call for.

"I have been undecided where to go at Easter," wrote Miss Norreys, "but, among several invitations, none seems to promise me the quiet I really feel I need, so surely as your very thoughtful one. It will be pleasant, too, to travel down with your daughter, for I have not seen her for some time, she, as well as I, being so busy. Indeed, I feel that you greatly overrate any little service I may have had it in my power to render her. My *sympathy*, as I think she knows, she can always count upon."

Mrs. Maryon read this with a feeling of some perplexity. She could not make up her mind what she *should* feel about and towards this Miss Hertha Norreys. She handed the letter to Louise.

"I cannot quite decide if we shall like her or not," she said. "What is there in her way of writing that is not quite—I don't know what to call it—not 'deferential,' that is too strong, for I suppose she is really a perfect gentlewoman. But almost as if she thought we were 'out of every thing,' as if rest and quiet were all she could possibly expect here?"

"Well, to a certain extent they are," said Louise with a smile. "Very likely Winifred has impressed upon her the extreme monotony and dullness of our life. But I suppose what you feel is the tone of the emancipated young woman of the day, mother—though from *Celia's* description of her I fancied Miss Norreys *above* that. However, we shall soon see her for ourselves, and I do agree with you that it is a very good thing she is coming. You will be able to judge for yourself about her—especially on *Celia's* account."

"Of course I hope she will enjoy it," said Mrs. Maryon. "I don't like the idea of bringing her down here merely as a satisfaction to myself. Lennox has promised to spend Easter with us, hasn't he? and that friend of his, Captain Hillyer."

"Yes," said Louise, "I'm sure we can count upon them. I wish Eric Balderson could have come, but he is going abroad for three weeks with his mother. It would have been a little

return for their great kindness to Winifred and Celia."

"He knows he can come whenever he likes," replied her mother. "Yes, they were very kind, but sometimes, Louise, I wonder if that visit to London was not a mistake. It only seemed to clench matters."

"No," said Louise, "nothing would have kept back Winifred, mother. Do try to believe that."

Easter, though it fell early that year, was wonderfully bright and mild. The morning which saw Miss Norreys and Winifred off to the country was, as to weather, a real red-letter day, and Hertha's spirits, as she drove to the station where she and her "devoted friend" were to meet, rose higher and higher.

Not that she was anticipating any special enjoyments in her visit. More than once she had asked herself if she was not acting foolishly in bestowing a whole week of her rare holidays upon perfect strangers—and strangers whom she had no particularly strong reasons for expecting to find sympathetic and congenial.

"I really don't know why I accepted," she thought.

But this morning she felt a sort of reward—if reward she deserved, as she said to herself—in the beautiful promises of spring delights that met her even in the dingy streets through which a hansom rapidly carried her.

"What will it not be in the country?" was almost her first greeting to Winifred, when that young lady appeared, more punctually than was her habit, in honour of her expected guest. "If this weather last it will be perfectly—heavenly. Primroses and gorse always picture to me the streets of gold, far more exquisitely than the thought of the hard, cold metal."

And her eyes sparkled, and her beautiful expressive face flushed with the quick instinctive response to nature which was one of her characteristics.

Winifred looked at her in some surprise. 'This phase of Miss Norreys' character was new to her, but as it *was* Miss Norreys and no one else, the girl's instinct was to admire and not criticise.

"You make me afraid to say what I have been wishing all the morning," she said with a little smile.

"Indeed, and what is that?" enquired Hertha.

"Oh," said Winifred, "it just struck me, seeing this nice weather, how delightful, how much more delightful it would have been to have a week's holiday in London with you. How many places we could have gone to see, what long charming mornings we could have spent, reading and talking, at the British Museum, for instance. Whereas—oh dear, I can scarcely hope to have you much to myself down at White Turrets."

"But it is the *country*, that makes all the difference in the world," said Hertha. "Even if I had not fixed to go, I don't think anything would have kept me in London to-day. Everything, every leaf, every bird's twitter, every breath of air, seems to be calling us out of the dust and glare of the weary streets."

"I suppose it's all a question of novelty," said Winifred. "You see spring in the country is such an old experience to me. There's nothing new in it."

"Nothing new," repeated Hertha, with a touch of scorn. "You don't suppose *I* have always lived in a town, do you? But as for 'nothing new' in the Spring—why, it is *always* new. Ever returning youth is its very essence. You cannot know anything of the true feeling of Spring, to speak so."

"Perhaps not," said Winifred, and for her the tone was very humble. "I am not at all poetical: I have told you so."

This softened Hertha, to whose nature the position of antagonism was never congenial.

"And I perhaps am foolishly enthusiastic in some ways," she said. "I feel so exuberant this morning."

"I am so glad," said Winifred fervently.

Then it proved to be time to take their tickets.

"You travel th—," Miss Norreys was beginning, when Winifred interrupted her. "I am *quite* pleased to go second," she said eagerly. "I—I thought you would like it better and I arranged for it."

"Poor girl," thought Hertha. "No doubt she has been saving in something else, to make up for the extra expense, which doubtless is for my sake. She has some very nice instincts about her, but I wish she could believe I don't mind going third. Still it might hurt her to urge the point."

They found a comfortable compartment, not

unpleasantly crowded, which at that season was rather exceptional good luck, and thanks partly to the presence of strangers, partly to Winifred's respect for her friend's remark, that she found few things more tiring than much talking in the railway, the journey was for the most part performed in silence.

As they approached its end, they found themselves at last alone, and Hertha, who had been enjoying with quiet though intense appreciation the varying view from her window of fields and trees in their first exquisite tenderness of green, of primroses on the banks, and homesteads in whose nestling orchards the fruit trees were already in blossom, turned to Winifred with a smile of glad pleasure.

"Is the country remarkably pretty and picturesque about here?" she asked, "or is it all the charm of the contrast to my London eyes? It seems to me I have never loved a spring day really before."

"I am so glad," said Winifred, her own face reflecting the ready sympathy which, poetical or not, her devotion to Hertha never failed in. "I am so very glad. It makes me hope that after all you will not find a week at home too dull and dreary. You see we can be perfectly independent: you and I can stroll about the woods talking all day long if we like."

"But you will want to see as much as you can of your mother and sisters, considering you are only with them for a week," said Hertha. "And I shall like to get to know your pretty Celia a little better. Don't trouble about me, Miss Maryon, I beg you. I shall be perfectly content. I only hope I shall give no trouble, and that none of you will—will make the very least difference with my being there."

Winifred looked slightly perplexed.

"Any difference," she repeated, "I don't see what difference your being with us *could* make, except the pleasure of having you? You see in a country house there is always a good deal of coming and going—there are not the 'told-off' hours and days as in London. But by-the-by," she added suddenly, "I did not see your maid at the station. Have you not brought her?"

"N—no," said Miss Norreys, "I said to Mrs. Maryon when I wrote, that I could do without her, I thought."

"Oh, of course it will be all right," said Winifred, quickly, at once thinking of the expense for her friend. "Nothing will be easier than for— But here we are," she broke off, as at that moment the train slackened, and she turned to gather together the odds and ends lying about the carriage. "Just put them near the door. Dawson will see to them," she went on. Then she added, with a little rising colour, "don't you think—*would* you mind calling me 'Winifred'? Before my own people, you know. I would so like it."

"I will try," said Hertha, smiling. "I may forget sometimes, but as you wish it, I will try."

"Thank you," replied Winifred. "Oh, there is Louise. Poor dear old Louise! She loves coming to meet arrivals. She is not very 'interesting,' you know—just a girl of the old type, but as good as gold. You need not be more with her than you like, if she bores you."

"I am not afraid of that," said Hertha, "very few people bore me. But you have scarcely ever mentioned her to me. Which is she?" as she ran her eye along the platform, where they were just drawing up, and seeing no one quite answering to her mental picture of the probably dowdy, certainly commonplace, ungifted "home" sister. "Not that——"

How glad she was afterwards that she had never completed the sentence! The person she was on the point of pointing out was a remarkably plain, indeed, shabby, little young woman, barely answering to the word "lady," even in its most conventional sense. No, no, that *could* not be a sister of Winifred's, still less of beautiful Celia's. "Oh, what pretty ponies!" she went on, hastily, as she caught sight of a charming low carriage, just visible through the station gates, "and what a sweet-looking girl driving them. How her hair glistens in the sunshine!"

"Yes," said Winifred, calmly, "that's Louise. Oh, Dawson—yes, take all these little things and bring them up with the luggage. Don't trouble about anything, dear Miss Norreys—they will be all right," as an unexceptionably correct young groom proceeded to load himself with their smaller goods and chattels.

## CHAPTER IX.

## "THE WHITE WEEPER."

HERTHA felt stupefied: but she had the presence of mind to say nothing more and to wait for the further development of this extraordinary mystification. Winifred, evidently in happy security evidently that their luggage was in good hands, led the way to the pony carriage, where a joyful—

"Dear Winifred—Miss Norreys—I am so glad to see you," followed by excuses at not daring to leave her place, "as the ponies are sometimes just a *little* fidgety with the trains, you know," left no shadow of doubt as to the identity of the girl with the bright brown hair. "There is comfortable room for three, as Winifred never minds sitting at the back," Louise went on, and Winifred, after kissing her sister, endorsed this statement by declaring she would rather sit anywhere than have to drive.

"Do you not like driving?" said Miss Norreys, feeling that she must say something, though a curious sensation of indignation against Winifred for the sort of trick she seemed to have played her was fast taking form and growing in her heart.

Winifred shook her head.

"I am too short-sighted, for one thing," she said, "and then the only thing that I enjoy in driving is reading, and of course you can't read if you've got the reins."

"Read," repeated Miss Norreys, with a slight and not altogether approving smile. "Certainly not. But reading——" and she turned to Louise. "Your sister soars above me," she said. "I can imagine no volume ever printed that one could glance at it for an instant with such an open book of beauty before us as this," and her eyes sparkled with that look of exquisite and intense enjoyment which with some, we feel is almost "akin to tears." "I don't think I *ever* felt the marvel and the magic of spring more than to-day."

Louise glanced at her, and by the sweetness of the glance, and the kindness of the whole—not remarkably pretty but thoroughly lovable and womanly face, Hertha felt that she ran no risk of being misunderstood.

"Yes," the girl replied, "a morning like this makes

one echo the 'very good,' with all one's heart, as far as Nature is concerned."

Then a little sigh made itself heard.

"Winifred," she said, "you will be very sorry—papa is not well. He had one of his bad attacks yesterday. He is better, but of course very weak, as usual."

"He must have been doing something imprudent," said Winifred, with the touch of asperity which, with many people, is the expression of real anxiety. "He has been so well lately."

"It has been leading up to it, I fear," said Louise. "There has been a great deal of extra work, and I am afraid more of it has fallen on him than should have been the case, though I have done my best. I am not as clever or clear-headed as Winifred," she added, with a smile, to Miss Norreys, "and in a large prop——"

An exclamation from her companion interrupted her.

"What a *beautiful* old house! A perfect Sleeping Beauty's palace," cried Miss Norreys. 'Do tell me whose it is. It must be a show place.'

It never occurred to her that the great white house, seen to peculiar advantage from their present point of view, as it rose among the trees, its many latticed windows glistening in the sunshine—a sort of fairy dignity brooding over all—could be the Maryons' home. For though she felt that she had been, it seemed to her, inexcusably misled by Winifred as to her family's social position and means, she could not all at once have realised how "very pleasant" were the material places in which their lines were laid.

Again Louise smiled, but this time with a surprised and almost reproachful glance of interrogation at her sister.

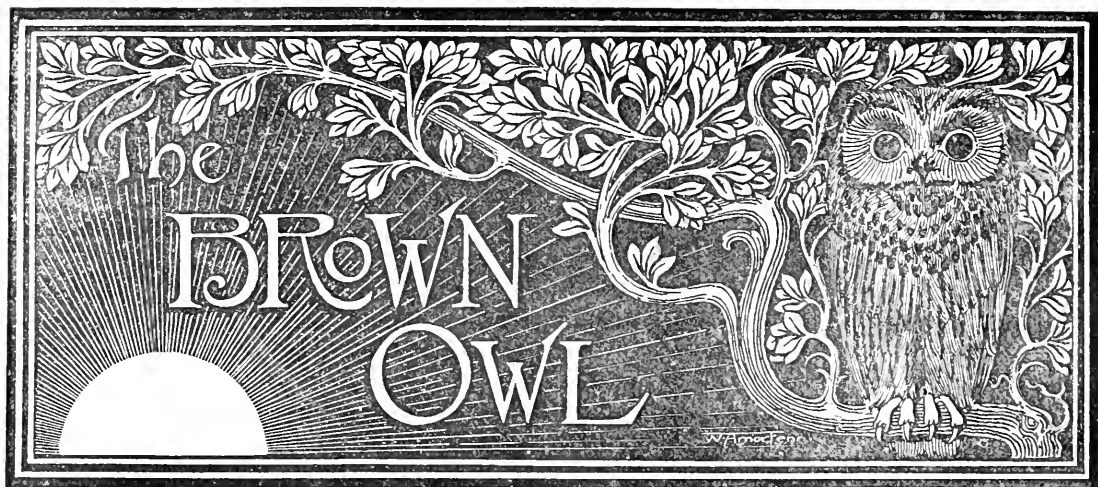
"Has not Winifred told you about our dear old home?" she said. "We think there is nothing like it in the world. Winifred, have you never described it to Miss Norreys?"

"We have always had so many other things to talk of," said Winifred, indifferently. "Besides, I am not good at description."

Hertha felt too provoked to look at her.

"You are right," she said warmly to Louise, "I am sure there cannot be another place like it. There is something dreamy about it too, even in this brilliant sunshine."

(*To be continued.*)



## THINGS IN GENERAL.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

IT would seem that we are doomed ever more and more as the progress of time goes on—or rather as this particular period of time, with its special and characteristic sillinesses, goes on—to be confronted with the name of Woman in very large letters wherever we go. I confess that I am beginning, in these circumstances, to be sick of the very name of Woman when spelt with a capital letter. I almost begin to dislike even the thing. After standing by my own side and preferring to associate with my own kind for a long lifetime, this half of humanity to which I belong becomes very nearly odious to me. There are Women Writers and Women Journalists, with clubs and dinners and public meetings and everything that is vulgar and technical, thrusting themselves continually into the way of an old—let me say, Person of letters, who neither desires her work to be excused because it is that of a woman, nor to be fictitiously applauded on the same principle—in a manner which becomes intolerable in the long run. Is there anything wonderful in the fact that it is possible at once to be a Woman and a Writer, that our attention should thus be demanded for it with so much repetition? I do not find anything at all wonderful in it. The woman writer is not like the man dressmaker, for instance, a wonder and a portent. Yet this is the point of view from which a great many ladies engaged more or less in the work of literature appear to regard themselves and their productions. The numbers of writers who are women is manifestly increasing every day.

This magazine is not without responsibility in having encouraged and guided the early footsteps of some who are entering that profession—so that a few words on the subject may not be out of season. In the eighteenth century it was thought a wonderful thing indeed that a woman should write: but during that age the general inferiority of woman was not questioned. All that has been changed nowadays. We no longer acknowledge ourselves to be inferior, but the other way. The latest generation of women are now conscious of being as well educated, and also as tall and as strong as their brothers. Why then perpetuate the brag which had some reason in it, when we were avowedly less strong, less educated and less able? After all there is no great difference between the female writers patronisingly classed together in pretty bindings on elegant bookshelves in the former time, and the Women Writers loudly asserting themselves in this. In the latter perhaps there is a more subtle sense of inferiority involved: for unless they felt with involuntary humility that it was a greater glory and a greater wonder to be a woman writer than a man writer, why should these ladies force the distinction of their sex upon everybody who will listen to them? I am sincerely of opinion that to be a writer is quite enough. If my young friends of the trade become good writers, as it is to be hoped they will do in time, what more could any advantageous circumstance do for them? If they are bad writers, which no doubt some few—let



us believe very few of the readers of *ATLANTA*—will be, the fact that they are women will not blunt any critical tooth. The brag is nothing but a confession of weakness.

There are women artists too, but they do not make so much fuss about it. It is only the weaker members who form themselves into separate societies. The best of them work steadily along to such a level as they find themselves able to attain, without flinging up a flag and blowing a trumpet and calling upon the world to recognise what a great thing it is that a woman should be able to paint a picture. I am very glad the painters are so much wiser, and truer to their womanhood, and I hope that the new writers will follow this example, and learn to know that it is the work and its quality which is the thing—not whether it is done by man or woman. If it does not appear on the face of it that it possesses those qualities which make a true man or a true woman, it is far better that it should remain unclassified.

It is a bigger question, and one that is more difficult to settle, whether there is any such inherent difference as to prevent the work of women from attaining ever to the level of that of men. To teach us humility we must allow, what everybody knows, that no woman—except perhaps in the sole path of fiction—has ever yet done any of the great work which a number of men have accomplished: the work which lives for ever. It is not much to say that no woman has ever approached the heights of Shakespeare—for what man has done it? He is but one, and alone. Up to this moment, however, there has been no competition on the highest level: but a great deal on those lower altitudes, where the majority of workers have to spend their lives—and this, perhaps, is the thing which more immediately concerns us. We cannot tell whether any of our young disciples will possess the great and divine gift of genius, but we know that a number of them will do very well, as well or perhaps better than their brothers, and that on the levels of ordinary work, as of ordinary living, it will be quite impossible to predict which, under the same conditions, will do best. The field is fair enough within these limits. There is one thing, however, which I should much desire to see acknowledged among women: and that is, that in Journalism, which is so popular a profession, which attains the

easiest results and the most immediate recompense, the entrance of women has not been an advantage. I am thankful to think that the Society papers began before the time when Women Journalists became a recognised branch of the profession. We have not happily that slur upon us: but yet I think that of all the vapid and foolish writing which has got into the papers since then, much of the most foolish and vapid has been contributed by women. It is not easy to be more silly or flippant than many of the young men of the trade—but the young women have accomplished it. Not to speak of those amazing compositions in which Florry and Gerty discourse to each other upon their mutual gowns and parties, and which are, as I hear with consternation, the most popular and indispensable portions of the papers in which they appear: the interviews, the descriptions, the experiences of the Woman Journalist, strike an even thinner and shallower note than those of the male of her species—and that is saying much. I think it very possible that a clever girl might be drawn into this kind of thing, which costs so little trouble, which “pays,” and which is an article in demand, without perceiving where her unwary feet may be leading her: and may thus risk or lose all better chances, before her judgment is sufficiently formed to recognise the danger.

A wonderful warning as to these risks was lately (but quite unintentionally) published by an American young lady, who favoured the public with the account of several deceptions of the most shameless kind, practised by her upon various unsuspecting people for the sake of getting “copy.” She took a situation as housemaid, never having swept a floor in her life. She put a false advertisement in the papers, to which she received answers, thus getting a number of foolish but trusting persons and their secret necessities into her power: and then she made of them and their distresses, and the puzzled mistress whose heart was sore for the incapable creature she had been deluded into hiring, a series of amusing articles for the pleasure of the vulgar reader. This young woman thought it great fun to cheat all these simple people who were so exceeding foolish as to believe her. Perhaps a man might have done as bad or worse—but he could scarcely have done this particular thing. An exuberance of animal spirits and a

total absence of all sense of responsibility, which latter is probably owing to the indulgence (not complimentary) with which feminine vagaries are regarded in America, are the explanations, not excuses, for actions so dishonourable. But this is an extreme example.

And I am glad also to think that the art of interviewing was not of feminine invention: but it is never a more foolish art than in a woman's hands. This, however, cuts two ways, for the silliest person is always he or she who is interviewed, and who thus consents, out of pure vanity, without even the prevailing need of copy and pay, to hold him or herself up to the ridicule of the world. I hope the young and budding writers who read "*ATALANTA*" will ponder these things. It is, by the way, something of a comfort to see that the sitters for these journalistic photographs are just as often, or, perhaps, more often, men than women. Vanity is no special endowment of one sex above another, as people used to suppose.

How curious it is that a subject of this kind goes on being discussed from year to year, without ever getting, as it seems, any nearer to the rational view. Women have been very badly treated often through the progress of the ages, chiefly because they have been the weakest, and therefore by a law, which has little to do with sex, have gone to the wall: partly for other more subtle and less definable reasons, which will never cease to be operative. But they are not specially ill-treated now: a great many wrongs have been redressed and rights conceded. There may be some things still to be attained, which would be an advantage to the race in general, but nothing to call for passion or for the denunciation of men, who individually are often quite innocent in the matter. We should

remember occasionally that men are not only our natural companions and partners in one special connection—and therefore of course our natural enemies and antagonists—but that they are likewise our fathers, brothers, and sons, and in these relationships not our natural enemies at all, but our closest and dearest friends. Let us admire and wonder at those special foolishnesses which belong to them, as we have always done, and as they do in their turn. But let us not believe we are so much better, so much purer, and more spiritual than they are, as it is the fashion in some high-flown circles to maintain. A lover of the chivalrous sort is very ready to say that he is not worthy, that no man is worthy, of the ethereal creature who is about to stoop from her pedestal to be his wife. It is a pretty thing to say, and we like him all the better for saying it: but it becomes quite a different matter, and not at all lovely or desirable, when it is the lady who says it, asserting her own superiority. The men, poor fellows, have their wrongs and their disabilities too. They take the many ratings they receive wonderfully well on the whole, and laugh, though it may be, according to popular diction, on the wrong side of their mouths. It is a sacrifice, no doubt, to give up such an easy subject, one on which almost everybody can find something to say, and a kind of audience, good or bad, to hear. But I think it would be very well for the new writer to be content to be a writer (or even a type-writer, or a watchmaker, or whatever her fate may permit her to be) without putting in "*Woman*" as an adjective before the name of her trade. It is in reality much more a plea for indulgence than an assertion of superiority, and both things ought to be equally odious to any honest, well-conditioned girl.



# THE ATALANTA SCHOLARSHIP AND SCHOOL OF FICTION



## THE HUMOROUS NOVEL.

*As Illustrated by Oliver Goldsmith.*

By A. H. JAPP, LL.D.

back for a specimen of that which might be held common, and in which our own day is so rich. But after all, there may be reasons—and good ones. If we do not live in an age more artificial than that of Goldsmith, we live in an age of novels. When Goldsmith wrote, the novel proper was yet in its infancy. Writers had not essayed all styles—had not yet attempted to exhaust all imaginable incident, situation, character, and method. Now-a-days, humour, as found in novels, is apt to be complicated with other things. Dickens, for example, all *too* boldly, sometimes in view alike of art and truth, allies it with pure caricature, mere extravagance, we had almost said, broad farce. Thackeray again, allies it with satire and sarcasm, which is now and then so keen and caustic that, like an acid on a plate, it bites into and gives unrelieved blacks where only lights should play. For humour is, by its essence, sympathetic and inclusive. George Eliot inclines too much to harness her humour to the heavy service of social theory, if not of revolt, while others, like Mrs. Humphry Ward and “Edna Lyall,” would fain

attach it to the dragging chain of theological and doctrinal difficulty and questioning, and become, for the nonce, teachers and preachers primarily. The “new humour,” as it is called, is very free, but it is also very thin, and tends to be sectional and verbal, and without depth or hold on human nature. Whatever defects may be found in “The Vicar of Wakefield”—defects that are mostly due to its simplicity and we may say its utter lack of ambition as to invention and plot—improbabilities and happy coincidences, and accidents many—it still remains one of our purest specimens of humour—humour uncomplicated utterly by any alien elements. It holds its place, “not by its freedom from defects, but the greatness of its beauties,” its delightful portraiture, and racy humour. The good nature—the fine sympathy and genial comprehensiveness—the sunny optimism—of Goldsmith, which gains, and only gains, effect from his fine perception of the pathos of life—due mainly to inequality in lot and in reward—is fully expressed in this masterpiece. With his simple materials, what effects he gets by touches the most natural, and, at the same time, the most unexpected! He does not seek to run outside

the most ordinary lines of human nature — his characters are by no means heroic—human weaknesses are with him so allied with elements interesting and attractive, that we wonder at the skill with which he holds us spell-bound over the fate of these very ordinary folks of his. He unveils their little failings, their vanities, their whims, their oddities, with no sense of bitterness—in spite of all these, we love them. Even Squire Thornhill he would have us at the end, in the moment of his exposure and disgrace, to pity rather than to hate. The art he shews in the portraiture of Mr. Burchell, with his sudden goings and comings, his honest love for Sophia, his eccentricities, and his occasional brusque ways, prepares us for the *denouement*, which yet is not wholly expected. His genial humour everywhere plays lightly over the current of his narrative. The Vicar's monogamist theories, and his writings on the subject, how lightly and humorously treated in his own words! The original strain of nature and tendency in each one, too, is skilfully made to foreshadow the fate, as coming events cast their shadow before.

How fine are some of the touches describing the effects of the introduction of Squire Thornton, and the resorts to which the girls had recourse to make themselves more attractive in his eyes.

The humour in these cases equals the art, which, after all, is artless and without apparent conscious effort. The most effective touches, after all, seem incidental and *innocent*, like the translations of the observations and feelings of a child.

The passage in which the Squire nonplusses Moses, with his "analytical investigation of the first part of my enthymem deficient secundum quoad or quoad minus," is quaintly touched, as well as the effects on the minds of the ladies of the family, of this fine effort of memory, which they mistook for humour. And then the effect produced by the talk of the two fine ladies from town about high life.

The episodes which introduce us to Ephraim Jenkinson; the dodges of the mother to entrap the Squire into an engagement—"the poor woman would sometimes tell the Squire that she thought him and Olivia extremely of a size, and would bid both stand up to see which was the tallest"—are just as true to nature and to character as is the wonderful picture, or group of portraits,

in which, while she appears a Venus, her two youngest are Cupids by her side, Olivia is an Amazon, and Sophia a Shepherdess, while the Squire figures by their side as Alexander the Great!

The home-bred pedant Moses is not always a fool, though he makes a dreadful mistake over the gross of green spectacles, along with Farmer Flamborough. "'Well, Moses,' cried I, 'we shall soon, my boy, have a wedding in the family: what is your opinion of matters and things in general?'" "My opinion, father, is that all things go on very well, and I was just now thinking that when sister Livy is married to Farmer Williams we shall then have the loan of his cider-press and brewing-tubs for nothing." "That we shall, Moses," cried I, "and he will sing us *Death and the Lady*, to raise our spirits into the bargain."

The interview with the players on that very trying journey of the Vicar, in vain pursuit of Olivia; the unexpected meeting with George, and renewal of intimacy with Miss Wilmot are marked by touches rarely felicitous and natural. This, for example, is at once delicate and suggestive—a part of the portrait of Miss Wilmot after George had reappeared. "Miss Wilmot's reception was mixed with seeming neglect, and yet I could perceive that she acted a studied part. The tumult in her mind seemed not yet abated. She said twenty giddy things that looked like joy, and then laughed loud at her own want of meaning. At intervals she would take a sly peep at the glass, as if happy in the consciousness of irresistible beauty, and often would ask questions without giving any manner of attention to the answers."

Goldsmith's humour is always close, nestling, delicate—there is no loud obtrusiveness in it as if he would bring the laugh, will he, nill he. There is a gentle passiveness and geniality in it untouched by anything gloomy or sardonic, a restfulness and easy sweetness like a breath of summer wind. And he never deals in innuendo or underhand suggestion.

The story of George's adventures has many true touches with knowledge of life and keen insight into foibles. The accumulation of calamities, and the fine traits that they bring into prominence in the Vicar, if to some of his family they are less blessed, are dealt with in that naïve and wholly optimistic spirit, which imparts to all Goldsmith's writing a gleam, as it were, of early morning sunshine, while the dew yet glistens on

the leaves. Even his clouds are laced with light. He does not believe that there is a possible situation which does not have its comparative advantages. The greatest roguery cannot really wrong the man of honest nature and noble purpose. The picture of the Vicar in prison and the way in which he overcomes the opposition and tricks of the rough and motley band there—to whom he is fain only to minister and do good—show the utmost resource and humour along with that quaint naturalness and realism which are, in his hands, so effective. The close is equal to the beginning—it is naïf, humorous, full of character; and exquisite indeed is the touch that makes the Vicar's wife at that festal gathering disappointed with her son's proposal that each gentleman should sit next to his lady, because she was thus deprived of sitting at the head of the table and carving the meat for them all.

The success of the writer is evident, not so evident the means by which he secured it. But one or two things are clear: his humour, his cheerful philosophy, and his clear, flowing, pleasant, graceful style stand him in good stead. There is no striving after fine writing or striking picture. All is kept very faithfully to the key with which the story opens; like a fine picture, it is all in tone. And yet it is full of surprises. Though he shows keen insight, he does not proclaim it—is very far from acting as the showman to his own work. He does not care for high lights, and keeps everything in proper degree subdued. He is gentle, naïf, ingenuous, and is fain to make his characters smile at their own extravagances, if they do not excite laughter in others, which, after all, they do, without directly aiming at it. He is close to life as he had found and known it. No doubt in *George's Adventures* he shadowed forth some of his own as well as elsewhere.

Some of his little remarks on men and women in general are very incisive, though he does not seek in any systematic way to air his philosophy. Here, surely, is a good specimen of this:—

“As men are most capable of distinguishing merit in women, so the ladies often form the truest judgment of us. The two sexes seem placed as spies upon each other, and are furnished with different abilities adapted for mutual inspection.”

The great lesson to be learned from Goldsmith is that human nature, in its simplest or most

whimsical guises, may be so used as to be full of interest and attraction, if it is approached and dealt with in the proper spirit. He does not seek bye-paths. He finds it is safer and most profitable for him to tread the common way. He wears a smile on his face, and folks are fain to smile on him in return. He will not consent to be burdened with mystery or with misery. If he uses either it is to emphasize the benefits that may be concealed under the most unpromising circumstances and dispensations. You may learn from Goldsmith that to tell a story of ordinary life well is better than to invent, and to seek the aid of fancy to decorate. All the scenes he paints he had actually seen in some form or other, at home or in his wanderings. The Vicar is in general outline no doubt a reminiscence, and some of the funniest incidents we may well believe had originally some foundation in fact.

Mr. Edward Ford, who wrote in the “*National Review*” for May, 1883, ingeniously attempted to trace the localities referred to in *Yorkshire*, with considerable success, and he also identified Sir William Thornhill with Sir George Savile, M.P. for the County of York; and, “like the lover of Sophia Primrose,” says Mr. Austin Dobson, “a soldier, a statesman, a philanthropist, and an eccentric,” whose “large fortune sunk under the benevolence of its possessor,” who indulged in no vices. A confirmatory coincidence is that the estate of Sir George was named Thornhill. Mr. Austin Dobson's notes to the “*Parchment Library*” edition present many curious points corroborative of this position, and to these the curious should turn.

Goldsmith drew from life and from his own heart: so must you, if you would succeed. If you would write a humorous novel you must first have entered genially into the lives of others by sympathy, so far as to have gained complete patience with them in their foibles, whims and weaknesses, through comprehension: so that whilst you see deep you can laugh genially with them, not at them, and can make their joys as well as their sorrows your own; and next, as is in fact implied in the first, you must subdue egotism and all temptation to self-celebration, and must paint them truly, only showing your creative genius by the rarer and finer atmosphere with which you surround them.

## ATALANTA SCHOLARSHIP AND READING UNION.

Describe conversation between two strangers in a railway carriage. Consideration will be given to subtlety of characterisation and smartness of dialogue. Papers not to exceed five hundred words.

### ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS JULY.

I.

*Lay of the Last Minstrel ; Marmion ; Rokeby*

II.

1. Miss Fotheringay. 2. *Pendennis*. Thackeray.

III.

1. Henry IV. [first part, act i. scene iii.]. 2. Shakespeare.

IV.

*Enid ; The Princess ; Enoch Arden.*

V.

The first Florentine printer : a Florentine scholar and writer of the 15th century ; a fellow-student of Michael Angelo.

VI.

1. *Christabel ; The Sigh ; The Ancient Mariner*. 2d Coleridge.

VII.

1. A cat and two gold fishes. 2. *Ode on the death of a favourite Cat*, by Gray.

VIII.

*The Epping Hunt*, by Tom Hood.

### SEARCH QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

I.

1. Who were Luath and Cesar? 2. Give poem and author.

II.

Give source of following quotations :—

“Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,  
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.”

“All that we see or seem  
Is but a dream within a dream.”

“Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil.”

III.

1. Who are referred to in this passage :—

“Mr. and Mrs. — were bran-new people in a bran-new house in a bran-new quarter of London. Everything about the — was spick and span new.”

2. Give author and work.

IV.

Who were: 1. *Fadladeen*; 2. *Alp*; 3. *Emilia Viviani*;  
4. *Thomas of Ercildoune*?

V.

Who wrote these lines :—

“If thou do ill, the joy fades, not the pains ;  
If well, the pain doth fade, the joy remains.”

VI.

1. Who speaks thus ?—

“———I know you are no coward ;  
You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.”

2. Give poem and author.

VII.

1. Name characters referred to in following quotations :—

“Young Spiritual Amazon, thy test is not there.”

“He with the long curling locks ; with the face of dingy blackguardism.”

“Beautiful, Amazonian—graceful to the eye : more so to the mind.”

2. Give title of work.

VIII.

1. Mention sonnets from which these lines are taken :—

“Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken.”

“Such dim-conceived glories of the brain  
Bring round the heart an indescribable feud.”

“Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,  
Half passionless, and so swoon on to death.”

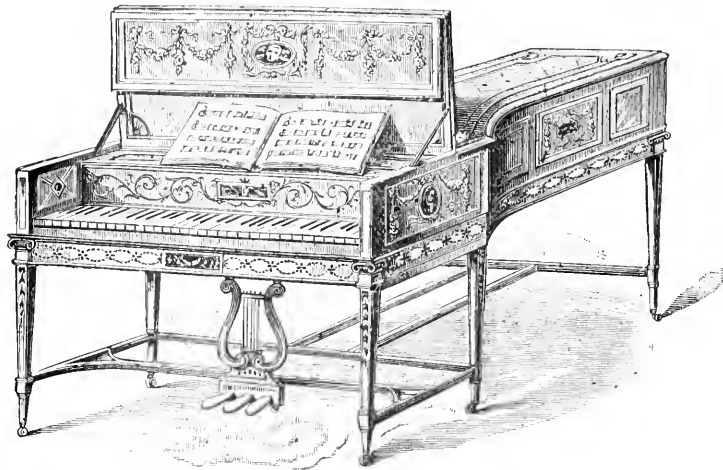
2. Give author.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOUND.

IT would be no figure of speech to claim that the *ne plus ultra* of musical mechanism has been reached in the present day: the development from the Egyptian dulcimer to the modern grand piano is not less remarkable than the supposed development of man from the primeval ape. There is no subject more engrossing than this gradual growth of mechanical appliance to meet the ever rising standard which the march of culture has imposed upon the sense of sound. The initial attempt which the world's history shows us to meet the harmonious need of man,

point being reached when it was set upon legs as we see it in the spinet.

The first progenitor of the modern piano was realised in the invention of the tamboura, which in turn gave place to the organum, the cithera, and the clavichord. Although the appellations of these several instruments varied with each maker, the essential difference was slight: the most important of this family group was perhaps the virginal, which helped to solace the bitter years of Mary Stuart's captivity, and was in much request among the polished circles that surrounded her royal cousin



MODERN GRAND PIANO, HARPSICHOED DESIGN.

is the family of rude stringed instruments, embracing the harp, lute, cithera, lyre, and psaltery. The plectrum, a piece of ivory used for striking the strings, probably suggested to the ingenious mind the possibilities dormant in the use of hammers.

The first advance was made with the introduction of an open box across the stringed space: to this was added a sounding-board at the base of the strings to give power and volume to the tones. The addition of a key board was an evolution of the twelfth century, the keys working on wooden pins, which were attached to crow or raven quills acting on the strings. The result of the action has been described as "a scratch with a sound at the end of it." The shapes of these instruments were either horizontal or harp shaped: bridges were added to the keyboard, and dampers were employed to modulate the vibration, the culminating

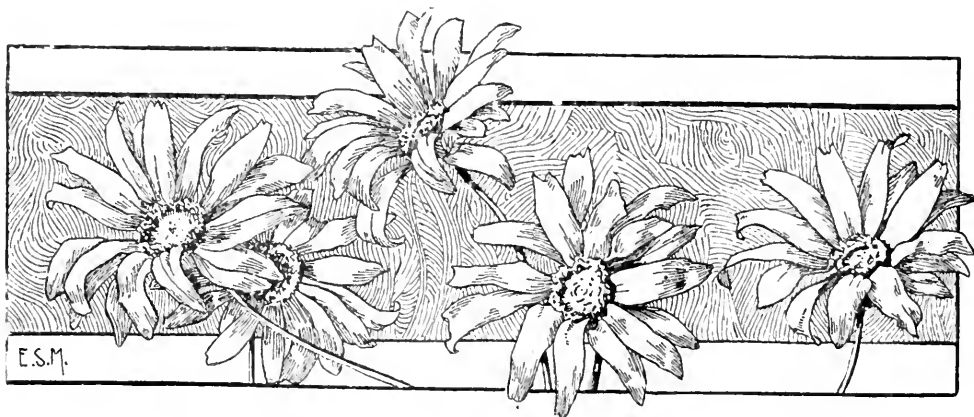
of England. Then followed the spinet, which in its turn was superseded by the more important harpsichord—the immediate pioneer of the pianoforte. This was much more elaborate in detail, an additional string being given to each note, steel wire taking the place of catgut. The makers modestly claimed to imitate the harmonies of such diverse pieces as the harp, lute, hautboy, guitar, bassoon, clarinet, kettledrum, and pipe. This was the instrument on which Handel, Mozart, and Beethoven composed their sublime productions, therefore must we reverence it, despite its crudities and absence of modulation.

There are three claimants to the distinction of having invented the piano proper—Bartolomeo Cristofori, an Italian; M. Marius, a Frenchman; and Christoph Gottlieb Schröter, of German origin. The chief improvement in this form was the sub-

stitution of hammers for the older method of sounding the strings. It is impossible to enter into the complicated mechanism which goes to make up the beauties of a modern grand. We can only lightly touch upon the more salient points as instanced in one of those superb instruments turned out by Messrs. John Brinsmead and Sons, whose world-wide reputation renders them singularly applicable for example. They offer every facility to the curious, either at their factory, Kentish Town, or at their imposing premises in Wigmore Street.

Of course the principal quality by which a piano is judged is its tone, and excellence in this respect is dependent to a very great extent upon the sounding board. It is the duty of the expert to look for the necessary quality and texture in the wood, and then to superintend the strengthening, bridging, thickness, dryness, and perfection of the scale. It is in this that the great international establishments have the advantage over smaller firms of less opportunity and experience. Of not less importance is the *action*, on which depends the power of expression and execution. The Brinsmead's patent, known as "the perfect check repeater" action, has been considered by authorities to give almost the perfection of touch, combining the qualities of freedom, lightness and durability. Considerable judgment has to be used in choosing the material for the strong frame or back. To withstand the constant strain of the strings, the dryness and formation of the material

must be absolutely flawless; otherwise there is a risk of the wrest plank splitting, or of some other part giving way. It will probably astonish the uninitiated to learn that as many as 6,637 separate pieces go to form the perfections of a grand: the stages and different hands through which these pass, before they are given to the world in their final unity, would require a separate catalogue for enumeration. The contemplation of the simple detail makes one's untrained mind swim. An improvement, which is due to Messrs. Tomkison some sixty years ago, is the process of overstringing, and in this Messrs. Brinsmead are again to the front with another valuable patent, which has superseded, in their instruments, the old-fashioned wrest-plank of wood. They use an iron bar projecting from the patent consolidated frame of the same metal. The wrest-pins, which are supplied with sexagon nuts, are passed loosely through holes bored in the metal flange, their position being parallel to the strings: the metal nuts rest on the outer or top side of the flange which supports the strain, and when turned, raise or lower the pins, and thus tighten or loosen the strings. The improvements are invaluable in tuning, giving purity, permanence, and accuracy in the tones, and avoiding the tendency to fall from the pitch and get out of tune. These are only two out of the many patents, the sole possession of which has helped to give the Brinsmead piano a foremost position among the first-class instruments of the day.







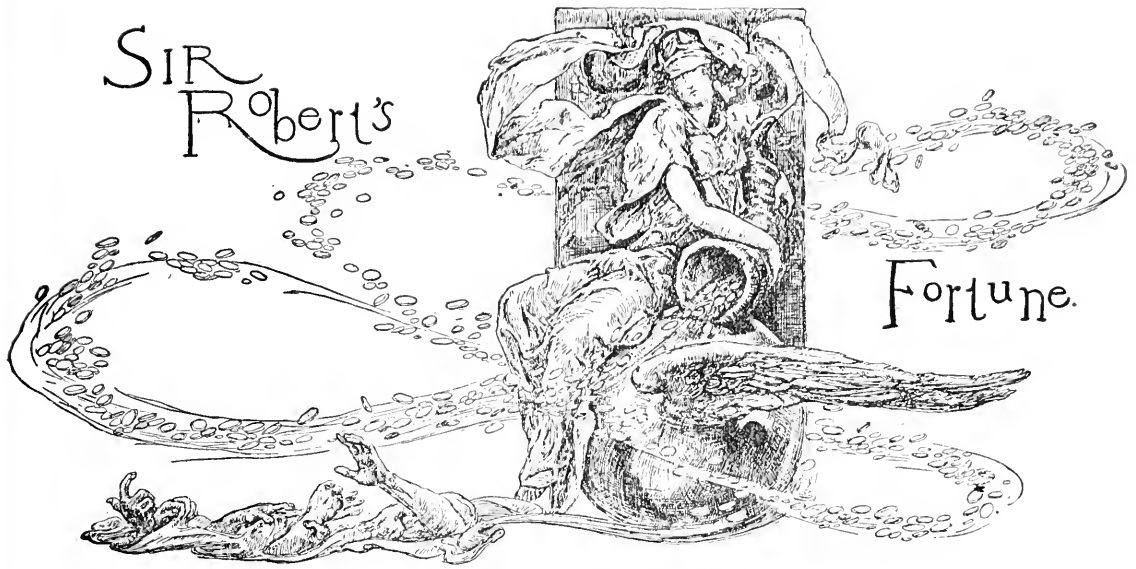


*Engraved by the Art Reproduction Co.*

THE ALARM.

*(From the picture in the Royal Academy.)*

*Charles Stuart.*



BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

CHAPTER XLV.

"BUT this is all very strange and requires explanation. I do not doubt in the least what you say, but it requires explanation," Mr. Wallace said.

Only a few of the gentlemen returned with him to the house. Two of them were the husbands of the two ladies who had been with Lily, and who now, with each a volume in her face, joined the surprised and curious men. Lily, too, had come back to the room. It was now that she had intended to make her statement, and it had become unnecessary. She was saved something, and yet there was worse before her than if this had not been saved.

"There is no explanation we are not ready to give," said Ronald, calmly. "We were married four years ago, in the Manse of Kinloch-Rugas, by Mr. Douglas's predecessor, dead, I am sorry to hear, the other day. My wife has the lines, which she will give you. Two witnesses of the marriage are in the house. Everything is in perfect order and ready for any examination. The reason of the secrecy we were obliged to keep up was the objection of Sir Robert, whom we have just laid with every respect in his grave."

"With every respect," Mr. Wallace said, with emphasis, and there was a murmur of agreement from the company round.

"These are my words—with every respect.

One may respect a man and yet fail to sacrifice one's own happiness entirely to him. My wife and I were in accord as to saving Sir Robert anything that might vex him in his old age."

Here Lily raised her head as if about to speak—but said nothing by a second thought, or perhaps by inability to utter anything in the midst of the flow of his address.

"It is unnecessary to say what it has cost us to keep up this, but we have done it at every risk. Our duty now is changed, and it is as necessary to make our position clearly understood as it was before to keep it private to ourselves. I would not allow Mrs. Lumsden to take this avowal upon herself, as I am sure she would have done had I not been here, or to encounter the fatigue of the day alone. I have preferred to look like an intruder, as I fear some of the gentlemen here must have thought me."

"No intruder," said one. "No, no, to be sure, no intruder," said another. "Not," said a third, "if this extraordinary story is true."

"That's the whole question," said Mr. Wallace. "My client knew nothing of it. He left his money to his niece as to a single woman. The lady has always been known as Miss Ramsay. How are we to know it is true?"

"You know me, however," said Ronald, with a smile, "Ronald Lumsden, advocate, son of John, of that name, of Portalloch. I think I have taken fees from you before now, Mr. Wallace. It

is not very likely I should tell you such a lie as that, in the lady's face."

"Miss Ramsay:" said Mr. Wallace, "Lord! if I knew what to call the lady! Madam, is this true?"

"It is true that I have deceived my uncle and everyone who knew me. It has been heavy, heavy on my conscience, and a shame in my heart. I can look no one in the face," cried Lily. "I meant to confess it to you to-day, as he says. Yes, it is true."

Though the house was still the house of death, according to all etiquette, and the blinds not yet drawn up from the windows, Mr. Wallace, W.S., uttered, in spite of himself, a low whistle of astonishment. And then he coughed, and drew himself up that nobody should suspect him of such an impropriety. "This is a strange case—a very strange case. These gentlemen must understand that I had no inkling of it when I invited them here to-day."

"What would it have mattered what inkling you had, Wallace?" said one of the most important of the strangers. "We cannot change what is done. Perhaps, indeed, there's no occasion. It is a dreary moment for congratulations, Mrs.—Mrs. Lumsden: or I would wish you joy, with a good heart."

"You will let me thank you on my wife's account," said Ronald. "As you say, it's a dreary moment—and we have had a dreary time of it: but that, I hope, is all over now."

"Over by the death of the poor gentleman that suspected nothing: that has treated his niece like his own child," said Mr. Wallace. "It is not a pretty thing, nor is it a pleasant consideration. I hope you will not think I am meaning anything unkind to you, Miss Lily—I beg your pardon, the other name sticks in my throat. It was not with any thought of this that my old friend left all his money to his niece—and we are met here to mourn his death, not to give thanks with these young people that it's over. He was a good friend to me, gentlemen, you'll excuse me: it sticks in my throat—it sticks in my throat."

"The feeling is very natural, and I'm sure we're all with you, Wallace: but, as I was saying, what's done cannot be undone," said the first gentleman again.

"And no doubt it is a painful thing for the young people," said another, charitably, "to have

to tell it at this moment, and to have it received in such a spirit. No doubt they would rather have put it off to another season. It's honest of them, I will say for one, not to put it off."

"And there's the will, I suppose, to read," said another, "and the days are short. My presence is certainly not indispensable, and I think I must be getting home."

"You will not take it unkind, Mrs. Lumsden, if we all say the same. It's enough to give the horses their death, standing about in the cold."

"There's no difficulty about the will," said Mr. Wallace. "It is just leaving all to her, and no question about it. Scarcely anything more but a legacy or two to the servants. He was a thoughtful man for all that were kind to him. You can see the will when you please at my office, and the business can be put into your hands, Lumsden, when you please. I suppose you're not intending to remain here?"

"That is as my wife pleases," said Ronald: "in that respect I can have no will but hers."

And then they all stood for a moment, in the natural awkwardness of such a breaking up: no will read; nothing to make a natural point of conclusion. The ladies came to the rescue, as was their part. One of them, touched by pity, took Lily into her arms, and spoke tenderly in her ear.

"My dear, you must not blame yourself beyond measure," she said. "You were very good to the old man. I have thought for a long time you had something on your mind: but if you had been his daughter ten times over, and had a conscience void of offence, you could not have been a better bairn to the old man."

"Thank you for saying so," said Lily, "I will remember you said it, as long as I live."

"Hoot," said the kind woman, "you will soon be thinking of other things. I will come back soon to see you, and you must just try to forgive yourself, my dear." She paused a moment, and Lily divined that she would have said, "and *him*:" but these words did not come.

"We will all come back—and bring our good wishes—another day," said this lady's husband, and then they all shook hands with her, with at least a show of cordiality—the half-dozen men feeling to Lily like a crowd—the other lady saying nothing to her but a half-whispered goodbye.

Ronald elaborately shook hands with them all, with a little demonstration again as of the master of the house. He went to the door with them, seeing them off, enquiring about their carriages. He was perfectly good mannered, courteous, friendly, but showing a familiarity with the place, warning the strangers of the dark corners, and especially of that worn step at the top of the stairs, which was positively dangerous, Ronald said, and must be seen to at once, and with an assumption of the position of the man of the house, which did not please the country neighbours. He was too well acquainted with everything, too pat with all their names, overdoing his part.

"Oh Miss Lily, Miss Lily," cried old Wallace, who had not called her by that name since she was a child, "how could you deceive him?—a man that trusted in you with all his heart!"

"Nobody can blame me," said Lily, drearily, "as I blame myself."

"You would never have had his money had he known. The will's all right, and nobody can contest it, but that siller would burn my fingers if it were me. I would have no enjoyment in it. I would think it a fortune dearly bought."

"The money—was I thinking about the money?" Lily cried, with a touch of scorn which brought back its natural tone to her voice.

"No, I dare swear you were not," said the old gentleman: "but if not you, there were others. It's never a good thing to play with money—either it sticks to your fingers and defiles you, or it's like a canker on your good name. He's away to his account, that maybe had something to answer for. He should have given you your choice—your lad or my siller. He should have put it into words. He should have given you your choice."

"He did," said Lily, almost under her breath.

"He did! I'm glad to hear it—it was honest of him—and you—thought it better to have them both. I understand now. It was maybe wise—but not what I would have expected of you."

Lily had not a word to say—she had hidden her face in her hands.

"Mr. Wallace," said Ronald, coming back, "I cannot have my wife questioned in my absence about things for which, at the utmost, she is only partially to blame. I am here to answer for her, and myself too."

"You will have enough to do with yourself.

Did you think, sir, you were to come and let off a surprise on us all, and claim Sir Robert's money, and receive his inheritance, and never a word said?"

"If it eases your mind, say as many words as you like" cried Ronald, cheerfully, "they will not hurt either Lily or me—precious balms that do not break the head."

"I would just like, my young sir, to punish ye well for your mockery of the Holy Scriptures, if not of me."

"The punishment is not in your hand," said Lily, uncovering her pale face. "We are not clear of it, nor ever will be—it will last as long as our lives."

"I can well believe that," said old Wallace. He put up the papers with which the table was strewn, into his bag. "You can come to me in my office when you like, Mr. Lumsden, and I will show you everything. It's unnecessary that you and me should go over it here," he said, snapping the bag upon them, almost with vehemence. "She's badly hurt enough: there is no occasion for turning the knife in the wound. I will leave you to make it up within yourselves," he said.

Once more Ronald accompanied the departing guest downstairs. He called Mr. Wallace's clerk; he helped Mr. Wallace to mount into the geeg which awaited him. No master of a house could have been more attentive, more careful of his guest. He wrought the old gentleman up to such a pitch of exasperation that he almost swore—a thing which occurred to him only in the greatest emergencies: and that it was all he could do to prevent himself from using his whip upon the broad shoulders of the interloper, who was thus speeding the parting guests. But the exigencies of the coach which he had to get at Kinloch-Rugas, at a certain hour, prevented much further delay. And Ronald stood and watched the departure of the angry man of business in the Kinloch-Rugas geeg with a sensation of relief. Was it relief? He was glad to get rid of him, no doubt, and of all the consternation and disapproval with which his appearance had been greeted. No one now had any right to say a word—the first and greatest ordeal was over. But yet there remained something behind, which made Ronald's nerves tingle: all that was outside had passed away. He had now to confront alone an antagonist still more alarming: his Lily, whom he loved, in spite of everything, whose

image had filled this gray old place with sweetness, who had always, up to their last meeting, been sweet to him, sweeter than words could say—his first and only sweetheart, his love, his wife. Now all the strangers were gone, the matter was between him and her alone. And Ronald, though he was so sensible and so strong, was, for the first time, afraid.

He came upstairs slowly, collecting himself for what was before him: not without a pause at the top to examine again that defective step, which he had so often remarked upon, which now must be seen to at once. He had accomplished all he had hoped. Sir Robert had not even kept him long waiting. Two years was not a very long time to wait: two years in comparison with the lifetime that lay before Lily and himself was nothing. They were young, and with this foundation of Sir Robert's fortune, everything was at their feet. All that his profession could give, all its prizes and honours—all that was best in life—the ease of never having to think or scheme about money, the unspeakable freedom and exemption from petty cares which that ensures. To do him justice, he did not think of the money itself. He thought that now, whether he was successful or unsuccessful, Lily was safe—that she would have no struggle to undergo, no discomfort—while, at the same time, he was very sure now that he would be successful: that everything was possible to him. A modest fortune to begin with, enough to keep the wife and family comfortable, whatever happens, and to free him from every thought but how to make the best of himself and his powers—was not that the utmost that a man could desire, the best foundation? He went back to his Lily, saying all this to himself, but he could not get his heart up to the height of that elation which had possessed him when he had put on his weepers and his crape for Sir Robert. He had not quite recognised the drawbacks then. Half of them—oh more than half of them—had been got over. There only remained Lily: Lily his wife, who loved him, for whom he had in store the most delightful of surprises, to whom he could show now, fully and freely, without fear of any man, how much he loved her, whose future life he should care for in every detail, letting her feel the want of nothing: oh, far better than that—the possession of everything that heart of woman could desire.

She was sitting as he had left her, in a large chair drawn out almost into the centre of the room—a sort of chair of state, where she, as the object of all sympathy, had been surrounded by her compassionate friends. It chilled him a little to see her there. She wanted that encirclement, the ladies behind her, supporting her, the surrounding of sympathetic faces. Now that position meant only isolation, separation: it gave the aspect of one alone in the world. He went up to her, making a little use of this as a man skilled in taking advantage of every incident, and took her hand. "Lily, my darling, let me put you in another place. Here is the chair you used to sit in. Come, it will be more like yourself."

"I am very well where I am," she said.

There was the chair beside the fire, where she had once been used to sit. How suggestive these dumb things, these mere articles of furniture, are when they have once taken the impress of our mortal moods and ways! It had been pushed by chance, by the movement of many people in the room, into the very position which Lily had occupied so often, with her lover, her husband, hanging over her or close beside her, in all the closeness of their first union, when the snow had built its dazzling drifts on every road, and shut them out from all the world. To both their minds there came for a moment the thought of that, the sensation of the chill fresh air, the white silence, the brilliance of the sun upon the sparkling crystals. But it was a hard and bitter frost that enveloped them now. Black skies and earth alike, every sound ringing harshly through. Lily sat unmoving. She looked at him with what seemed a stern calm. She seemed to herself to have suffered all that could be suffered in so short a space of time, the shame of her story all laid bare—her story which had so different an aspect now, no longer the story of a true, if foolish and imprudent love, but of calculation, of fraud, of a long, bold, ably planned deception for the sake of money. Her neighbours did not indeed think so of her, or speak so of her, as they jogged along the frost-bound roads, talking of nothing but this strange incident: but she thought they were doing so, and her heart was seared and burned up with shame.

He drew a chair near to her and laid his hand upon hers. "Lily," he said.

She did not move: the touch of his hand made

her start, but did not affect her otherwise. "There is no need for that," she said, somehow with an air as if she scorned even to withdraw her hand, which was so cold and unresponsive. She added, with a long-drawn breath: "You can tell me what you want—now that you have got what you want. It is all that need be said between you and me."

"Lily," he said, lifting her hand, which was like a piece of ice, and holding it between his, "what I want is you—what is anything I can get or wish for, without you?"

She withdrew her hand with a little force. "All that," she said, "is over and past. Why should so sensible a man as you are try to keep up what is ended, or to go on speaking a language which is—which has lost its meaning? You and I are not what we were: I at least am not what I was."

"You are my wife, Lily."

"Yes, the more's the pity—the more's the pity!" she cried.

"That is not what I should ever have expected from you. You are angry, Lily, and I confess there are things which I have done—in haste, or on the spur of the moment, or considering our joint interests perhaps more, my dear, than your feelings——"

"It would be well," cried Lily, with some of her old animation, "to decide which it was—a hasty impulse, as you say, on the spur of the moment, or our joint interests, which I deny for one. I never for a day was for anything but honesty and openness, and no interest of mine was in it: but at least make up your mind. It was either in your haste or it was your calculation—it could not be both."

"I did not think you would ever bring logic against me," he said.

"Because I was an ignorant girl—and so I was, believing everything you said, so many things that turned out one after another to be untrue: that you were to take me home at once, as soon as the snow was over; that you were to get a house at Whitsunday, at Martinmas, and then at another Whitsunday, and then——" Lily had allowed herself to run on, having once begun to speak, as women are apt to do. She stopped herself now, with an effort. "Of these things words can be said, but of what remains there are no words to

speak. I will not try. I will not try! You have trampled on my heart and my soul and my life to your own end—my uncle's money, my poor uncle that believed me, every word I said! And now I ask, what do you want more? Let me know it, and if I can I will do it."

"Do you know," he cried, suddenly grasping her hand again, with an almost fierce clutch, "that you can do nothing but what I permit? You are my wife, you have nothing, your uncle's money or any other but what I give you. You're not your own to do what you like with yourself, as you seem to think—but mine to do what I like and nothing else. If we're to play at that, Lily, you must know that the strong hand is with me."

"So it appears," she said, with a fierce smile, looking at her fingers, crushed together, with the blood all pressed out of them, as he dropped her hand. His threat, his defiance, did not enter into her mind in all its force. Even in those days such a bondage of one reasonable creature to another was at first impossible to conceive. And Ronald was quick to change his tone. Of all things in the world the last he wanted was to enter into the enjoyment of Sir Robert's fortune without his wife.

"Lily," he said, "Heaven knows it is far from my wish to be tyrannical to you. There is no happiness for me in this world without you. If you can do without me, I cannot do without you. Am I saying I am without fault? No, no. I've done wrong—I've done many things wrong. But not beyond forgiveness, Lily, surely not that? What I did I thought was for the best. If I had thought you would not understand me, would not make allowance for me—but I believed you would trust me as I trusted you. Anyway, Lily, forgive me. We're bound till death us part. Forgive me: a man can say no more than that."

He was sincere enough at least now. And Lily's heart was torn with that mingling of attraction and strong repulsion which is the worst of all such unnatural separations. She said at last: "I am going away to-morrow, Beenie and me. I had settled it before. You will not stop that. If you will give your help I will be thankful. Nothing in this world, you or any other, can come between me and *that*. If it is a living bairn or if it is a green grave——" Lily stopped, her voice choked, unable to say a word more.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

LILY was no more visible that day. She retired to her room, having indeed much need of repose, and to be alone and think over all that had passed. He said a great deal more to her than is here recorded: but Lily's powers of comprehension were exhausted, or she did not listen, or her mind was so much absorbed in her own projects, that she was not aware what he said. His presence produced an agitation in her mind which was indescribable. At first the sense that he was there, the mere sight of him, after all that had come and gone, was intolerable to her. But after a while this changed: his voice became again familiar to her ears, his presence recalled a hundred, and a hundred recollections. This was the man whom she had chosen from all the world, whose coming had made this lonely house bright, who had changed her lonely life and everything in it, who was hers, her love, her husband, the one man in the world to Lily. There was no such man living, she said to herself sternly, as the Ronald of her dreams—but yet this was the being who bore his name, who bore his semblance, who spoke to her in a voice which had tones such as no other voice had, and made her heart beat in spite of herself. This was Ronald—not her Ronald, but Ronald himself—the man who had deceived her and made her a deceiver, who had robbed her of her child in her weakness, when she could not go after him, and swore to her a lie that the child was dead. All that was true: but it is not much of a love which dies with the discovery that the object of it is unworthy. She had thought it had done so—all things had seemed easy to her so far as he was concerned. But now Lily discovered that life was not so easy as that. The sound of his voice, that so familiar voice which had said so much to her, had gone through all these delusions like a knife. Was he to blame that she had made a hero of him, that she had endowed him with qualities he did not possess? This was Ronald, the real man, and there was between him and her the bond of all bonds, that which can never be broken. And she saw confusedly that there had been no false pretences on his part, that he had been the same throughout, if it had not been that her eyes were blinded and she saw her own imagination only. The same man: she did not do

him the injustice to think that he had been a cheat throughout, that he had not loved her. It was not so simple as that either: but he had determined with that force which some men have that she should not lose her fortune. Already her heart, excusing him, put it that way: and he had, through all obstacles, carried out this determination. Was it her part to blame him? and even if that were her part, was it the part of a woman never to forgive?

I do not say that these were voluntarily Lily's thoughts: but she had become, as she had never been before, the field of battle where a combat raged in which she herself seemed to have comparatively little part. When the one side had made its fiery assault, then the other came in. There rose up in her with all these meltings and softening, a revulsion of her whole being against Ronald, the man who had made her lie. Into what strange thing had he turned her life for all these years? A false thing, full of concealments, secrets, terrors of discovery. He had led her on from lie to lie, and then when the climax of all came, there had been no mercy, no relenting, no remorse in his breast. He had torn her child from her without care for him or for her, risking the lives of both, and leaving in the bosom of the outraged mother a wound which could never be healed. She felt it now as fresh as when she awakened from her illness and came to life again by means of the pain—even now, when perhaps, perhaps that wrong was to be put right and her child given back to her. If he were in her arms now, it would still be there. Such a blow as that was never to be got over: and it had been inflicted for what? For no high motive of martyrdom—for the money, the horrible money, which now, at the cost of so many lies and outrages of nature, had fallen into his hands.

Oh no, no! things are not so easy in this world between human creatures made of such strange elements as those of which it has pleased the Master of all things to compound us. It is not all straightforward: love—or else not love, perhaps hate. Love was on every side, the heart crying out towards another that was its mate, and at the same time an insupportable repugnance, revulsion, turning away. He was all that she had in the world: all protection, companionship, support that was possible to her was in him: and yet her heart



sickened at him, turning away, feeling the great gulf fixed which was between them. This great conflict within deadened Lily to all that was going on outside. She was too much occupied with the struggle even to see, much less feel, the state of affairs round her. What she did herself she did mechanically, carrying on what she had intended beforehand, with the waning strength of that impulse which had originated in her before this battle began. She remembered still what she had resolved to do then, and did it dully, without much consciousness. She had made up her mind to go off at once upon her search. Had anything occurred to prevent her doing this? She could not tell, but she went on in so different a way, carrying out her resolution. She counted her money, which was all hers now, about which she could have no scruples. There was some of the housekeeping money, which still she herself felt was her uncle's, entrusted to her: but which certainly, when she came to think of it, was her own now—and some which Sir Robert had given her, about which there could be no question. It seemed a large sum of money to her inexperience—if only she knew where to go, and what to do!

Robina was packing, or appearing to pack—a piece of work which ought to have been done before now. Lily reproved her for being so late, but not with any energy. The things outside of her were but half realised, she was so busy within. Beenie was in a curious state, not good for much. She wept into the box over which she stooped, dropping tears on her mistress's linen when she did not succeed in intercepting them with her apron. But though she wept all the time, she sometimes broke into a laugh under her breath, and then sobbed. It was evident that she had no heart for her packing. She put in the most incongruous things and then took them out again: and would rise up stealthily from her knees when Lily's back was turned, and run to the window, coming back again with a hasty "Naething, naething, mem," when her mistress remarked this, and asked what she wanted. Downstairs—but Lily did not see it, nor would have remarked it had she seen, Katrin stood at the open door. She had her hand curved over her eyes, though there was no sunshine to prevent her from seeing clearly anything that might appear on the long dark frost-bound road. Half the morning, to the neglect of every-

thing within, Katrin stood looking out. It was a curious thing for the responsible housekeeper of the house—the cook, with her lunch and her dinner on her mind—to do: and so the other servants said to themselves, watching her with great curiosity. Were there any more "ferlies" coming, or what was it that Katrin was expecting from the town?

Of these things Lily took no notice. She went into the drawing-room ready for her journey, conscious that she must see her husband before she left the house, but with a great failing of heart and strength, wishing only to get away, to be alone, to go on with the terrible struggle in her thoughts. There was no one there when she went in, and it was a relief to her. She sat down to recover her strength, to recover her breath. She had told him that she was going, and so far as she could remember he had made no opposition. She had appealed to him to help her, but so far as she knew he had not attempted to do so. It was not yet quite time to go, and Beenie was behindhand, as she always was. Lily was glad, if the word could be used at all in respect to her feelings at this moment, of the little quiet, the time to breathe.

There was, however, some strange commotion going on in the house—a sound outside of cries and laughter, a loud note of Beenie's voice in the adjacent room, and then the rush of her heavy footsteps downstairs. There arose in Lily's mind a vague wonder at the evanescence of all impressions in the women's minds. They had all wept plentifully the day before at the funeral, and spoken with sickly stifled voices as if they had been not only sorrowful, but bowed down with trouble. And now there was Beenie, loud with a shriek of what sounded like joy, and Katrin's voice rising over a little babel of confused sound, in exclamations and outcries of delight. What could have changed their tone so suddenly? But Lily asked herself the question very vaguely, having no attention to give to them. The only external thing that could have thoroughly roused her would have been her husband's step, and the thrill of being face to face with him again.

It was not long before the sound of approaching footsteps made her heart leap into the wildest agitation again. The noise had gone on downstairs, the cries of delight, the sound of sobbing, and for one moment something—a small brief note

which made Lily start even in her self-absorption. But she had not heeded more than that one quick heart-beat of surprise. Was that, at last, Ronald's step coming quickly up the winding stair? She clasped her hands firmly together, and wound herself up as best she could for this meeting, the interview which would perhaps be their last. Her eyes were fixed upon the door. She was conscious of sitting there rigidly, like a figure of stone, though her being was full of every kind of agitation. And then there was a pause. He had not come in. Why did he not come in?

Finally the door was slowly opened: but at first no one appeared. Then there was a whisper and another sound, a sound that went through and through the listening, waiting, agitated woman who seemed to have no power to move: and then—

There came in something white into the room, a little speck upon the darkness of the walls and carpet—low down, white, with something like a rose above the whiteness. This was what Lily saw: her eyes were dim, and everything was confused about her. Then the speck moved forward slowly with tottering, uncertain movements, the whiteness and the rose wavering. There came a great cry in Lily's heart, but she uttered not a word—a terror, lest any movement of hers should dispel the vision, took possession of her. She rose up noiselessly, and then, not knowing what she did, dropped upon her knees. The little creature paused, and Lily, in her semi-conscious state, became aware of the blackness of her own figure in her mourning, and the great bonnet and veil that covered her head. Noiselessly she undid the strings and threw it behind her, scarcely breathing in her suspense. The child moved again towards her, relieved too by the removal of that blackness, and Lily put out her arms. How can I tell what followed? She could not, nor ever knew. The child did not shriek or cry as by all rules he should have done. He rolled and wavered, the rose growing distinct into a little face, with a final rush into his mother's arms. And for a moment, an hour, how long was it? Lily felt and knew nothing but that again she had her baby in her arms—her baby that had been snatched from her unconscious, that came back to her with infantile perceptions, smiles, love in its face. She had her baby in her arms, not shrinking from her as she had figured

him to herself a hundred times, but putting up his little hands to her face, pleased with her, not discomposed with her kisses, putting his soft cheek against hers: the one was as soft as the other, and as the warm blood rose in Lily's veins and the light came to her eyes and the joy to her heart, as softly, warmly tinted too, one rose against another. She forgot herself and all about her—time and space, and all her resolutions and her struggle and strain with herself, and her mourning and her wrongs. Other people came into the room and stood round, women crying, laughing, unable to do anything but exclaim and sob in their delight. But Lily took no notice. She had her child against her heart, and her heart was healed. She could not think where all the pain had gone. Her breath came free and soft, her life sat lightly on her, her cares were over. She wanted to know nothing, see nothing, hear nothing more.

But this could not be. In another minute Ronald came into the room quickly, no doubt full of anxiety, but full also of the energy of a man who has the command of the situation and means to settle it in every way, not unkindly, but yet authoritatively. With a word he dispersed the women, stopping their outcries, which had been a sort of accompaniment to the song of content that was in Lily's heart, and then he came quickly forward and put his arm round the group of the mother and child. He pressed them to him and kissed them, first his wife and then the baby, who sat on her knee. "Now all is well," he said, "my Lily, all is well? Everything is forgiven and forgotten, and you and me are to begin again."

Then Lily came suddenly back out of her rapture. She came back to the life to which he called her, in which he had played so strange a part. How her heart had melted towards him when he was not there! To be Ronald had seemed to her by moments to be everything—but now that he was here, kneeling before her, his child on her knee, his arms round her, his kiss on her cheek, there rose up between them a wall as of iron, something which it seemed impossible should ever give way—a repulsion stronger than her own will, stronger than herself. She made an involuntary movement to free herself. And her face changed, the rose hues went out of it, the light from her eyes. All well—how could all be

well? Two years during which this child had been growing into consciousness in another house, with other care, with neither father nor mother: and she left widowed and bereft, to play a lying part and be another creature—not what she was. And all for money—money—nothing better: and now the money was won by all those lies and deceptions, now all was to be well?

"Let me be," she said, hoarsely, "let me be. A little rest, I want a rest. I am not equal to any more."

He got up to his feet, repulsed and angry. "You do not think what I am equal to," he said, "or hesitate to inflict on me what punishment, what cruelty you please. And yet everything that has been done was done in your own interests, and who but you will get the good of it all?"

"My interests?" Lily cried.

And then there came an unexpected interruption. The baby, for all so young as he was, became aware of the change of aspect of things around him. His little rose-lip began to quiver, and then he set up a lamentable cry, which, to the inexperienced heart of Lily, was far more dreadful than ever was the cry of a child. As she tried to soothe him there appeared in the doorway Margaret Bland, the woman who had taken him away. And Lily gave a cry like that of her child, and clung to the baby who, for his small part, struggled to get to his nurse, the only familiar figure to him in all this strange place. "Not you," cried Lily, "not that woman who stole him from me. Beenie! Not you, not you!"

"And yet, mem," said Margaret, "it is me that has been father and mother and all to him when none of you came near. And the darling is fond o' me and me of him like my own flesh and blood."

"Beenie, Beenie!" cried Lily, wild with terror, as the child slid and struggled out of her arms. "Katrin, Katrin! oh, don't leave her, not for a moment—don't let her take him away."

Once more the cloud of women appeared at the door, all the maids of the house delighted over the child, and Beenie in the front, seizing Margaret by the skirts as she gathered up the child in her arms. "Na, na, she'll no take him an inch out o' my sight," Beenie cried.

Lily stood up trembling, breathless, confronting her husband as this little tumult swept away. A

passion of terror had succeeded her rapture of love and content: and yet there was a compunction in it and almost a touch of shame. That chorus of excited women did not add to the dignity of her position. He had not said anything, but was walking up and down the room in impatience and annoyance. "Who do you think would take him from you *now*?" he cried in his exasperation, adding fuel to the fire.

Oh, not now! There were no interests to be involved now—the money was safe, for which all these hideous plans had been laid. If this was meant to soothe, it was an ill-chosen word. And for a moment these two people stood on the edge of one of those angry recriminations which aggravate every quarrel and take all dignity and all reason from the breach. Ronald perceived his mistake even before Lily could take any advantage of it, had she been disposed so to do.

"Lily," he said, "your life and mine have to be decided now. There is neither credit nor comfort in the position of deadly opposition which you have taken up. I may have sinned against you. I told you what was not true about the child, I acknowledge that. I should not have pretended he was dead. I saw my mistake as soon as I had committed it: but it was as ineffectual as it was wrong. You did not believe me for a minute, therefore I did no harm. The rest was all inevitable, it could not be helped. Enough has been said on that subject. But all necessity for these expedients is over now. Everything is plain-sailing before us: we have the best prospects for our life. I can promise that no woman will have a better husband than you will find me. You have a beautiful healthy child who takes to you as if you had never been parted from him for a day. We have a good house to step into—"

"What house?" she cried, surprised.

"Oh, not the garret you were so keen about," he answered, a smile creeping about the corners of his mouth, "a house worthy of you, fit for you—the house in Moray Place."

"Uncle Robert's house!" she cried, almost with a shriek.

"Yes," he said, "to which you are the rightful heir, as you are to his money. They are both very safe, I assure you, in *my* hands."

"You are," she said, breathlessly, "the proprietor—now?"

"Through you, my bonnie Lily: but there is no mistake or deception about that," he said, with a short laugh, "they are very safe in my hands."

No man could be less conscious than Ronald, though he was a man full of ability and understanding, of the effect of these words of his triumph upon his wife's mind. He thought he was setting before her in the strongest way the advantages there were for her, and both, in agreement and peaceful accord, and how prejudicial to her own position and comfort anything else would be. He was perhaps a little carried away by his success. Even the experiment of this morning, how thoroughly successful it had been. The child might have been frightened and turned away from the unknown mother—instead of this, by a providential dispensation, he had gone to her without hesitation and behaved himself angelically. How any woman in her senses could resist all the inducements that lay before her, all the excellent reasons there were to accept the present and ignore the past—in which nothing had been done that was not for her interest—he could not tell. He began to be impatient with such folly, and to think it might be well to let her have a glimpse of what, if she rejected this better part, lay on the other side.

Lily had seated herself once more in her chair: it was the great chair she had occupied when the funeral party assembled, and gave her something of the aspect of a judge. She had lost altogether the colour and brightness that had come into her face. She was very pale, and the blackness of her mourning made this more visible. And she sat silent: oh, not convinced as he hoped—far from that—but struck dumb, not knowing what to say.

At this moment, however, there was another interruption, and the little figure of Helen Blythe, covered too with crape and mourning, but with a natural glow and subdued brightness as always upon her morning face, appeared at the door.

#### CHAPTER XLVII.

HELEN was in all her crape, and yet her upper garment was not "deep," like that of a woman in her first woe. It was a cloak which suggested travelling rather than any formality. And it appeared that the bright countenance with which she came in was one of sympathy for Lily, rather

than of any cheerfulness of her own. She came forward holding out both her hands, having first deposited her umbrella against the wall. "I am glad, glad," she said, "of all this that I hear of you, Lily: that you have got your husband to take care of you, and, it appears, a delightful bairn. I knew there was something more than ordinary between you two," she said, stopping to shake hands with Ronald in his turn. "And vexed, vexed was I to see that Mr. Lumsden disappeared when old Sir Robert came. It must have been a dreadful trial to you, my poor Lily. But I never knew it had gone so far: married in my own parlour, by my dear father, and not a word to me. Lily, it was not kind."

Lily had no reply to make to this. It carried her away into a region so far distant, so dim, like a fairy tale.

"But my dear father," said Helen, "had little confidence in my discretion, and he might think it better I should know nothing, in case I should betray myself—and you. Oh, how hard it must have been many a time to keep your secret—and when your child came, poor Lily, poor Lily! But I do not yet understand about the bonnie bairn. They tell me he is a darlin'; but did he come to you in a present, as we used to think the babies did when we were children, or by what witchcraft did you manage all that, Lily, my dear?"

"And where did you hear this story that you have on your fingers' ends?" said Ronald, interrupting these troublesome questions.

"Well," said Helen, half offended, "if I have it on my fingers' ends, it is that I take so much interest in Lily and all that concerns her—and you too," she added, fearing that what she had said might sound severe. "You forget that there were two years when we saw you often, and then two years that we saw you not at all; and often and often my father would ask about you. 'Where is that young Mr. Lumsden?' 'Have you no word of that young Mr. Lumsden?' He was very much taken up about you, and why you did not come back, nor any word of you. To be sure, he had his reasons for that, knowing more than the like of me."

"Those very reasons should have shown him how I could not come back," said Ronald, sharply, "but you have not told me where it was you got this story, which few know."

"Well—not to do her any harm if you think she should have been more discreet—it was Katrin that told me. She is a kind, good, honest woman. She was just out of herself with joy at the coming of the dear bairn. You will let me see him, Lily?"

"You look as if you were going on a journey. Oh, Helen, where are you going?" cried Lily, glad to interrupt the questions, and to give herself also a moment's time to breathe.

"Yes, I am going on a journey," Helen said, stedfastly looking her friend in the face. Her eyes were clear; her colour, as usual, softly bright, not paled by the crape, or by her genuine, but not excessive, grief. She had mourned for her father as truly as she had nursed him, but not without an acknowledgment that he had lived out his life and departed in the course of nature. By this time, though but ten days of common life had succeeded the excitement and commotion of Mr. Blythe's funeral, at which the whole country-side had attended, Helen had returned to the ordinary of existence, and to the necessity of arranging her own life, upon which there was now no bond. The plea of the assistant and successor (now minister) of Kinloch-Rugas that there should be no breach in it at all, that she should accept his love and remain in the house where she was born, as his wife, had not moved her mind for a moment. She had shaken her head quietly, but very decisively, sorry to hurt him or any creature, yet fully knowing her own mind; and in so far as she could do so in the village, Helen had made her preparations. She had a little land and a little money, the one in the hands of a trustworthy tenant, the other very carefully, very safely, invested by her father with the infinite precautions of a man to whom his little fortune was a very great matter affecting the very course of the spheres. Helen had boldly, with indeed an unspeakable hardihood, notwithstanding the horror and remonstrances of the man of business, taken immediate steps to withdraw her money and get it into her possession. All this was done very quietly, very quickly, and, by good luck, favourably enough. And then she made arrangements for her venture: the great voyage into the unknown.

"Yes," she said, "I am going on a journey. You will perhaps guess where—or if not where, for I am not just clear on that point myself, you will at least know with what end. I have nothing to

keep me back now"—a little moisture came into Helen's eyes, but that did not affect her steady, small voice, "and only him in the world that needs me. I am going to Alick, Lily. You will tell me it's rash, as everybody does—and maybe it is rash. If he has wearied at the last and given up all thoughts of me, I will never blame him; but that I cannot think, and it is borne in on my mind that he has more need of me than ever. So I am just taking my foot in my hand and going to him," she said, looking at Lily with a smile.

"Helen! oh, you will not do that! Go to him, to you know not where, to circumstances you are quite, quite ignorant of? Oh, Helen, you will not do that!"

"Indeed and that will I," said Helen, with the same calm and steady smile. "I am feared for nothing, but maybe that he might hear the news and start to come to me before I could get to him."

"That is enough," cried Lily. "Oh, wait till he comes; send for him! Rather anything than go all that weary way across the sea alone."

"I am feared for nothing," Helen said, still smiling, "and who would meddle with me? I am not so very bonnie, and I am not so very young. I am just as safe, or safer, than half the women in the world that have to do things the other half do not understand."

"Like myself, you think," Lily said: and it was on her lips to add, "if you succeed no better than me!" But the bondage of life was upon her, and of the pride, and the decorum of life. Ronald had taken no part in this conversation, but he was there all the time standing against the window, looking out. He was very impatient that his conversation with his wife, so important in every way, should be interrupted. His own affairs were so full in his mind, as was natural, that any enforced pause in the discussion of them appeared to him as if the course of the world had been stopped. And this country girl's insignificant little story, perfectly wild and foolish as it was, that it should take precedence of his own, at so great a crisis! He turned round at last and said, in a voice thrilling with impatience, "I hope, as Lily does, that you will do nothing rash, Miss Blythe. We have a great deal to do ourselves with our own arrangements."

"And I am keeping Lily from you! You will excuse me," cried Helen, wounded, "but I am

going to do something very rash, as you say, and I may never come back : and I cannot leave a friend like Lily, and one my father was proud of, and thought upon on his death-bed, and one that knows where I am going and why, without a word. There is perhaps nobody but Lily in the world that knows what I mean and what I am doing, and my reasons for it," Helen said. She took her friend's hands once more into her own. "But I will not keep you from him, Lily, when no doubt you have so much to say."

"You shall not go," said Lily, with something of her old petulance, "till you have seen what I have to show you, and till you have told me everything there is to tell. Oh, my baby, my little bairn, my little flower ! I could be angry that you have put him out of my head for a moment. Come, come, and see him now."

Ronald paced up and down the room when he was left alone : his impatience was not perhaps without some excuse. He was very anxious to come to some ground of agreement with Lily, some basis upon which their life could be built. He had hoped much from the great *coup* of the morning, from the bringing back of the child, which he had intended to do himself, taking advantage of the first thrill of emotion, and identifying himself, its father, with the infant restored to her arms : but the women, with their folly, had spoiled that moment for him, and lost him the best of the opportunity, and now there was another woman thrusting her foolish story into the midst of that crisis in his life. Ronald was out of heart and out of temper. He began to see, as he had never done before, the difficulties that seemed to close up his path. He had feared, and yet not feared, the tempest of reproaches which no doubt Lily would pour upon him. He did not know her any better than this, but expected what the conventional woman would do in a book, or a malicious story—from his wife : and he had expected that there would be a great quarrel, a heaping up of every grievance, and then tears, and then reconciliation, as in every story of the kind that had ever been told. But even if she could resist the sight of him and of his pleading, Ronald felt a certainty that Lily could not resist the return of her child ; for this she would forgive everything. This link that held them together was one that never could be broken. He had calculated everything with the greatest

care, but he had not thought it necessary to go beyond that. When she had her child in her arms, Lily, he felt sure, would return to his, and no cloud should ever come between them more.

But now this delusion was over. She had not showered reproaches upon him. She had not done anything he expected her to do. The dreadful, the astounding revelation that had been made to him was that this was not Lily any longer. It was another woman, older, graver, shaped by life and experience, without faith, with a mind too clear, with eyes too penetrating. Would she ever turn to him otherwise than with that look, which seemed to espy a new pretence, a new deception in everything he said ? Ronald still loved his wife ; he would have given a great deal, almost, perhaps, the half of Sir Robert's fortune to have his Lily back again as she had been : but he began now, for the first time, to feel that it would be necessary to give up that vision, to arrange his life on another footing. If she would but consent at least to fulfil the decorums of life, to remain under his roof, to be the mistress of his house, not to flaunt in the face of the world the division between these two who had made a love-marriage, who had not been able to keep apart when everything was against their union, and now were rent asunder when everything was in its favour ! What ridicule would be poured upon him ! What talk and discussion there would be ! His mind flashed forward to a vision of himself alone in Sir Robert's great house in Moray Place, and Lily probably here at Dalrugas with her child. Sir Robert's house was his, and Sir Robert's fortune was his. Except what he chose to give her, out of this much desired fortune—for which indeed it was he who had planned and suffered, not she—she had no right to anything. There was so much natural justice in Ronald Lumsden's mind that he did not like this, though, as it was the law, and he a lawyer, it cost him less than it might have done another man : but he meant to make the strongest and most effective use of it all the same. He meant to show her that she was entirely dependent upon him—she and her child ; that she had nothing, and no rights except what he chose to allow her, and that it was her interest and that of her child (whom besides he could take from her, were he so minded) to keep on affectionate terms with him.

This, though it gave him a certain angry satis-

faction, was a very different thing, it must be allowed, from what he had dreamed. He had thought of recovering Lily as she was, in the freshness of her love and faith before even the first stroke of that disappointment about the house, the garret in Edinburgh, upon which her hopes had been fixed. Full of brightness and variety, a companion of whom one never would or could tire, whose faith in him would make up for any failure of appreciation on the part of the rest of the world, nay make an end of that—for would not such a faith have inspired him to believe in himself, to be all she believed him to be? Did he live a hundred years, and she by his side, Ronald now knew that he would never have that faith again. And the absence of it would be more than a mere negative—it would inspire him the wrong way, and make him in himself less and less worthy—a man of calculations and schemes—all that she most objected to, but of which he felt the principle in himself. It is not to be supposed that he himself called, or permitted himself to imagine these calculations base. He thought them reasonable, sagacious, wise, the only way of getting on in the world. They had succeeded perfectly in the present instance. He was conscious, with a sort of pride, that he had thus fairly gained Sir Robert's fortune, which he had set before him as an object so long ago. He had won it, as it were, with his bow and his spear, and it was such a gain to a young man as was unspeakable, helping him in every way, not only in present comfort but in importance, in his profession, in the opinion of the solicitors, who had always more confidence in a man who had money of his own. Ah, yes, he had won in this struggle—but then something cold clutched at his heart. He was a young man still, and he loved his wife—he wanted her and happiness along with all those other possessions: but when he won Sir Robert's money he had lost Lily. Was this so? Must he consent that this should be so? Were they separated for ever by the thing that ought to unite them? He said to himself: "No, no," but in his heart he felt that cold shadow closing over him. They might be together as of old—more than of old—each other's constant companions. But Lily would never be to him what she had been: they would be two, living side by side, unconsciously or consciously criticizing each other, spying

upon each other. They would no more be one.

To meet this, when one has expected the flush and assurance of success, has of all things in the world the most embittering and exasperating effect upon the mind. Ronald had looked for trouble with Lily—the ordinary kind of trouble, a quarrel perhaps *à outrance*, involving many painful scenes: but he had never thought of the real effect of his conduct upon her mind, the tremendous revulsion of her feelings, the complete change of his aspect in her eyes, and of that which she presented to him. A movement of disgust with everything, with himself, with her, with his success, and all that it could produce, succeeded the other changes of feeling. It is not unnatural at such a moment to wish to do harm to somebody, to throw off something of that sense of the intolerable that is in one's own mind, upon another. And Ronald bethought himself of what Helen Blythe had said, her complete acquaintance with the story which had been so carefully concealed from her—and her confession that she had it from Katrin. A wave of wrath went over him. Katrin had been in the secret from the beginning, not by any desire of his, but because the circumstances rendered it inevitable that she should be so, and nothing could have been done without her complicity. He said to himself that he had never liked her, nor her surly brute of a husband, who had looked at him with so much suspicion on many of his visits here. They thought themselves privileged persons, no doubt: faithful servants, who had been of use, to whom on that account everything was to be forgiven: who would be in his own absence, as they had been in Sir Robert's, a sort of master and mistress to Dalrugus, recounting to everybody, and to the child when he grew up, the history of his parents' marriage, entertaining all the country neighbours with it—an intolerable suggestion. With them at least, short work could be made. He rang the bell hastily and desired that Katrin should be sent to him at once, she and her husband: and awaited their appearance impatiently, forming sharp phrases in his mind to say to them, with the full purpose of pouring on their heads the full volume of his wrath.

Katrin received that summons without surprise. She had thought it likely that something would be said to her of gratitude for her faithful service, and for her care of Lily—perhaps a little present

given, which Katrin did not want, but yet would have prized and guarded among her chief treasures. She called in Dougal from the stable, and hastily brushed the straws and dust from his rough coat. "But they ken you're aye among the beasts," she said. She herself put on a spotless white apron, and tied the strings of her cap, which in the heat of the kitchen were often flying loose. Dougal followed her, with no such look of pleasure on his face. To him Ronald was still "that birkie from Edinburgh," whose visits and absences, and all the mystery of his appearance and disappearance, had so often upset the house and wrought Miss Lily woe. The wish that he could just have got his two hands on him had not died out of his mind, and it was bitter to Dougal to feel that this man was to be henceforward his master, even though he believed he was about to receive nothing but compliments and gratification from his hand. Ronald was still walking up and down the room when the pair—Katrin with her most smiling and genial looks—appeared at the door.

"Oh, you are there," he said, hastily, with a tone of careless disdain. "I wished to speak to you at once to let you know what I have settled, that you may have time to make your own arrangements. There are likely to be many changes in the house—and the way of living altered altogether. I think it best to tell you that, after Whitsunday, Mrs. Lumsden will have no further occasions for your services."

He had not found it so easy as he thought, in face of Katrin's changing face, which clouded a little with surprise and disappointment at his first words: then rose into flushed amazement, and then to consternation. "Sir!" she cried when he paused, aghast, and without another word to say.

"I kent it would be that way," Dougal muttered, behind her, in the opening of the door.

"Well!" said Ronald, sharply, "have you anything to say against it? I am aware you have for a long time considered this house your own, but that was simply because of the negligence of the master. That time is over, and it is in new hands. You will understand, though it is not the usual time for speaking, that I give you lawful notice to leave before the Whitsunday term in this current year."

"Sir," said Katrin again, "I'm thinking I canna

rightly trust to my ears: are you meaning to send me—me and Dougal, Sir Robert's auld servants, and Miss Lily's faithful servants—away? and take our places from us that we've held this twenty year? I think I maun be bewitched, for I canna believe my ears."

"Let us have no more words on the subject," said Ronald, "arguing will make it no better. You are Sir Robert's old servants, no doubt, but Sir Robert is dead and buried: and how far you were faithful servants to him—after all that I know of my own experience: the less said of that the better, it seems to me."

"Dougal," said Katrin, with a gasp, "haud me, that I dinna burst. He is meaning the way we've behaved to him!"

"And he has good reason," said Dougal, his shaggy brows meeting each other over two fiery sparks of red eyes. "'Od, if I had had my will, many's the time I would have kickit him out o' the house."

Dougal's words were but as a muttering—the growl of a tempest—but the two people blocking the door, meeting him with sudden astonishment and a quick-rising fury of indignation, which matched his own, wrought Ronald's passion to a climax: he seized up his hat, which was on the table, and pushed past them, sending the solid figures to right and left. "That's enough. I have nothing more to say to you," he said.

It was Katrin that caught him by the arm. "Maister Lumsden," she said, "ye'll just satisfy me first. Is it because of what we did for you—takin' ye in, makin' ye maister and mair, keepin' your secret, helpin' a' your plans—that you're now turnin' us out of our daily bread, out o' our hame, out o' your doors?"

"Cheating your master in every particular," said Ronald, "as you will me, no doubt, whenever you have a chance. Yes; that is one of my reasons. What did you say?"

He raised the cane in his hand. The movement was involuntary, as if to strike at the excited and threatening countenance of Dougal behind. They were huddled in a little crowd on the top of the winding stair. Ronald had turned round, on his way out, at Katrin's appeal, and stood with his back to the stair, close upon the upper step. "What did you say?" he cried again, sharply. Dougal's utterances were never



clear. He said something again, in which "Go-d!" was the only articulate word, and made a large step forward, thrusting his wife violently out of the way.

It all happened in a moment, before they could draw breath. Ronald, it is to be supposed, made a hasty, involuntary step backward, before this threatening, furious figure—with his arm still lifted, and the cane in it, ready to strike: but lost his footing, and thus plunged headforemost down the deep well of the spiral stair.

#### CHAPTER XLVIII.

LILY was very reluctant to let Helen go. She kept her on pretence of the child, who had to be exhibited and adored. A great event annihilates time. It seemed already to Lily that the infant had never been out of her arms, that he had always found his natural refuge pressed close to her, with his little head against her breast. She had at first, with natural but unreasonable feeling, ordered Margaret out of her sight, she who had been the instrument of so much suffering to her: but the woman had defended herself with justice. "It is me that have done everything for him all this time," she said. "It is me that have trained him up to look for his mammaw. Eh, it would have been easy to train the darlin' to look to nobody but me in the world: but I have just made it his daily thought that he was to come to his mammaw—and summer and winter and night and day I have thought of nothing but that bairn." Lily had yielded to that appeal, and Beenie had already made Margaret welcome. They sat in the little outer room, already established in all the old habits of their life, sitting opposite to each other, with their needlework and all its little paraphernalia of workboxes and reels of thread, brought out as if there had never been any interruption of their life, and the faint, half-whispered sound of their conversation making a subdued accompaniment: while Lily, with her child on her knee, pausing every moment to talk to him, to admire him, to respond to the countless little baby appeals to her attention, appeared to Helen an image of that perfect happiness which is more completely associated, to women, with the possession of a child than with any other circumstance in the world. Helen did not know, except in the vaguest man-

ner, of anything that lay below. She divined that there might be grievances between the two who had been so long parted. But Helen herself would have forgiven Ronald on the first demand. His sins would have been to her simply sins, to be forgiven, not a character with which her own was in the most painful opposition. She would have entered into no such question. Lily detained her as long as possible, inquiring into all her purposes, which it was far too late to attempt to shake. Helen, in her rustic simplicity and complete ignorance of the world, was going to America, to its most distant and rudest part, the unsettled and dubious regions of the West, the Backwoods, as they were then called: which might have been in another planet for anything this innocent Pilgrim knew of them—and indeed at that time, unless to those who had made it a special study, those outskirts of civilisation were known scarcely to any. "There will aye be conveyances of some kind. I can ride upon a horse if it comes to that," Helen said, with her tranquil smile. "And no doubt he will come to meet me, which will make it all easy."

"And that is the whole of your confidence," cried Lily.

"No, no: my confidence is in God that knows everything: and Lily, you should bless His name that has brought you out of all your trouble, and given you that darlin', God bless him, and a good man to stand by you, and your settled home. Oh, if I can but get Alick to come back, to settle, to work my bittie of land, and live an honest, quiet life like our forbears"—the tears stood for a moment in Helen's eyes—"but I will think of you, a happy woman, my bonnie Lily: and it will keep my heart."

What a strangely different apprehension of her own position was in Lily's heart as she sat alone when Helen had gone. The baby had gone to sleep and had been laid on the bed, and she began to pace slowly about in her room, as Ronald was doing so near to her, with a heavy heart, notwithstanding her joy, wondering and questioning with herself what the life was to be that lay before her. A settled home, a good man to stand by her, a lovely child. What more could woman want in this world? The crisis could not continue as it was now—some ground of possibility must be come to, some foundation on which to build

their future life. To think of accompanying her husband to Edinburgh, taking possession of her uncle's house, establishing herself in it, he the master of everything, made her heart sick. If they had stolen his money from old Sir Robert it would have been less dreadful, than thus to take everything from him, in defiance of all his wishes, as soon as he was dead—when he could assert his own will no more. If she could remain where she was, Lily felt that she could bear it better. But this was only one part of the question before her, which had to be settled. She who had become Ronald's wife in the fervour and enthusiasm of a foolish young love, who had lived on his coming, on the hope of his return, on the dream of that complete and perfect union before God and man in which nobody could shame them or throw a shadow on their honour—to find herself now, after being betrayed and deceived and outraged, her heart torn out of her breast, her child out of her arms, the truth out of her life, in the position of the happy woman, her home assured, her husband by her side, her child in her arms—to be called upon to thank God for it, to take up her existence as if no cloud had covered it, and face the world with a smiling face, forgetting all that interval of misery and deprivation and falsehood! Her steps became quicker and quicker as the tide of her thoughts rose. Amid all the surroundings, which were those of perfect peace, the child asleep in its cradle, the soft undertones of the attendant women—yet all that passion and agony within!

But Lily knew this could not be. Dreadful reason and necessity faced her like two dumb images of fate. Some way of living had to be found, some foundation on which to build the new, changed, disenchanted life. She had no desire to shame Ronald in the sight of his friends, to make her indignation, her disappointment the property of the world. There would be critics enough to judge him and his schemes to secure Sir Robert's money. It was hers, in the loyalty of a wife, to take her share of the burden, to let it be believed at least that all had been done with her consent: and obnoxious as this was to Lily, she forced her mind to it as a thing that had to be. That was, however, an outside matter—the worst of the question was within: how were they to live together side by side, to share all the triv-

ialities of life, to watch over together the growth of their child, to decide together all the questions of existence, like two who were one, who were all in all to each other—these two who were so far and so fatally apart? But Lily did not disguise from herself that this must be done. She calmed herself down with a strong exertion of her will, and prepared herself to meet her husband, to discuss with him, as far as was possible, the future conditions of their life.

She had turned to leave her room, in order to join Ronald and proceed to this discussion, when the silence of the house was suddenly disturbed by a shriek of horror and dismay: no little cry, but one that pierced the silence like a knife, sharp, sudden, terrible, followed by a voice, in disjointed sentences, declaiming, praying, crying out like a prophet or a madman. The two women came rushing to Lily from the outer room, struck with terror. What was it, who was it that was speaking? The voice was not known to any of them: the sound of the broken words, loud, as if close to their ears, gradually becoming intelligible, yet without any meaning they could understand, drove them wild with terror. "What is it?" they all cried. Was it some madman who had broken into the house? Lily cast a glance, the mother's first idea to see that all was safe with the child, and then hastened through the empty drawing-room, where she expected to find Ronald. The door was open, and through the doorway there appeared a tragic, awful figure, a woman with her hands sometimes lifted to her head, sometimes wildly flung into the air, her voice growing hoarser, giving forth in terrible succession those broken sentences, in wild prayer, exhortation, invective, it was impossible to say which. Some locks of her hair, disturbed by the motion of her hands, hung loose on her forehead, her eyes were wildly enlarged and staring, her lips loose and swollen with the torrent of passionate sound. For a moment Lily stood fixed, terrified, thinking it a stranger—someone she had never seen before: and the first words were like those of a prayer.

"Lord hae mercy! Lord hae mercy! Swear ye didna lay a finger on him, no a finger! Swear ye didna touch him, man! Oh, the bonnie lad, oh, the bonnie lad!" Then a shriek again, as from something she saw. "Tak him up gently, tak him softly! his head, his head! tak care of his

head. Oh, the bonnie lad, the bonnie lad! Lord hae mercy, mercy! Say ye didna lay a finger on him. Swear ye didna touch him! Oh, his head, his head, it's his head! Oh, men, lift him like a bairn! Lord hae mercy, hae mercy! Say ye didna lay a finger on him, oh, the bonnie lad, the bonnie lad!" The wild figure clasped its hands, watching intently something going on below, which now became audible to the terrified watchers also, sounds of men's footsteps, of hurried shuffling and struggling, audible through the broken shrieks and outcries of the woman at the top of the stairs.

"Who is it?" cried Lily, breathless with terror, falling back upon her attendants behind her.

"Katrin, Katrin, Katrin!" cried Beenie, carried away by the wild contagion of the moment, "she's gone mad, she's gone out of her senses. Mem, come back to your ain room, come back, this is nae place for you!"

Katrin! was it Katrin, this wild figure? Lily darted out and caught her by the arm.

"Katrin! what has happened? Is it you that have been crying so? Katrin, whatever it is, compose yourself. Come and tell me what has happened. Is it Dougal? What is it? We will do everything, everything that is possible."

Katrin turned her changed countenance upon her mistress, her swollen lips hanging apart ceased their utterance with a gasp. She looked wildly down the stairs, then, putting her hands upon Lily's shoulders, pushed her back into the room, signing to Robina behind. "Keep her away, keep her—" she seemed to them to say, making wild motions with her hands to the rooms beyond. Her words were too indistinct to be understood, but her gestures were clear enough.

"Oh, mem," cried Beenie, "it will be something that's no for your eyes. For mercy's sake bide here and let me gang and see."

"Whatever has happened, it is for me to see to it," said Lily. And then, disengaging herself from them, she said, for the first time very gravely and calmly, "My husband must have gone out. Go and look for him. Whatever has happened, it is he who ought to be here."

She got downstairs in time to see the stumbling, staggering figures of the men carrying him into the library. But it was not till some time afterwards that Lily had any suspicion what it

was. She thought it was Dougal, who had met with some dreadful accident. She had the calmness in this belief to send off at once for a doctor in two different directions; and, having been begged by her uncle's valet not to go into the room till the doctor came, obeyed him without alarm, and went out to the door to look for Ronald. It was strange he should have gone out at this moment, but how could he know that anything would be wanted to make his presence indispensable? Most likely he was angry with her for keeping him waiting, for talking to Helen Blythe when there were things so much more important in hand. She went out to the door to look for him, not without a sense that to have him to refer to in such an emergency was something good. Nor without the thought that it would please him to see her looking out for him over the moor.

\* \* \*

Ronald never spoke again. If his death was not instantaneous in point of fact, it was so virtually, for he never recovered consciousness. He had fallen with great force down the stairs from the worn upper step, which had failed his foot as he made that recoil backward from Dougal's threatening advance—the step of which he had so often spoken in half derision, half seriousness, as a danger for any old man. Neither he nor anyone else could have supposed it was a danger for Ronald, so young, so full of energy and strength. And many were the reflections, it need not be said, upon the vicissitudes of life and the fate of the young man, just after long waiting, come into possession of all that was best in life, fortune and happiness, and all the rest. The story was told all over the country, from one house to another, and in Edinburgh, where he was so well known. To have waited so long for the happiness of his life and then not to enjoy it for a week, to be seized by those grim fangs of fate in the moment of his victory, in the first hour of his joy! The papers were not as bold in those days as now. The fashion of personalities had not come in unless when something very scandalous, concealed under initials, was to be had. But there was nothing scandalous in Ronald Lumsden's story.

In the inquiry that followed, there was at first an attempt to suggest that Dougal, who was shown to have been always in opposition to him, and sometimes to have uttered

half threats of what he would do if he could get his hands on that birkie from Edinburgh, was instrumental in causing his death. And poor Katrin, changed into an old woman, with gray hair that would not be kept in order under her white cap, and lips that hung apart and could scarcely utter a word clearly, was examined before the Procurator, especially as to what she meant by the words which she had been heard by all in the house to repeat as she stood screaming at the head of the stairs: "Swear you never lifted a finger upon him." Were these directions she was giving to her husband in case of any future investigation? or was she adjuring him to satisfy her, to let her know the truth? But Katrin was in no condition to explain to anyone, much less to the Procurator in his Court, what she had meant. But there was no proof against Dougal, and every evidence of truth in his story; and any doubt that might subsist in the minds of persons apt to doubt everything, and to believe the worst in every case, died away into silence after a while. It is possible that the possibility harmed him, though, as he retained his place and trust in Dalrugas, even that was of no great consequence: but Katrin never was, as the country folk said, "her own woman" again. She never could get out of her eyes the horror of that sudden fall backwards, the sound against the stone wall, on the stone steps. In the middle of the night, years after, she would wake the house, calling upon her husband, with pathetic cries, to swear he never laid a finger on him. This made their lives miserable, though they did not deserve it: for Katrin knew at the bottom of her heart, as Dougal knew, but having said it once, would not repeat—that he laid no finger on Ronald, nor ever, save in the emptiest of words, meant him any harm.

Lily was lost for a time in a horror and grief of which compunction was the sharpest part. Her heart-recoil from her husband, her sense of the impossibility of life by his side, her revulsion against him, overwhelmed her now more bitterly, more terribly than the poignant recollections of happiness past, which overwhelm many mourners. The only thing that gave her a little comfort in those heavy depths, was the remembrance of the moment when, all unknowing that he could never again come to her, she had gone out to look for Ronald over the moor. There might have been

comfort to her after a while in that moor, which had been the confidant of so many of her thoughts of him: but to go up and down, in all the common uses of life, the stairs upon which he died, was impossible. She felt a compunction the more to leave the scene of all the happier days—the broken life which yet was often so sweet, which had been the beginning of all. It seemed almost an offence against him to leave a place so connected with his image: but still it was impossible to remain. There was a little mark upon the wall which made them all shudder. And Lily was terrified when her baby was carried up or down those stairs: the surest foot might stumble where he had stumbled, and it is not true that the catastrophes of life do not repeat themselves. Life is all a series of repetitions: and why not that as well as a more common thing?

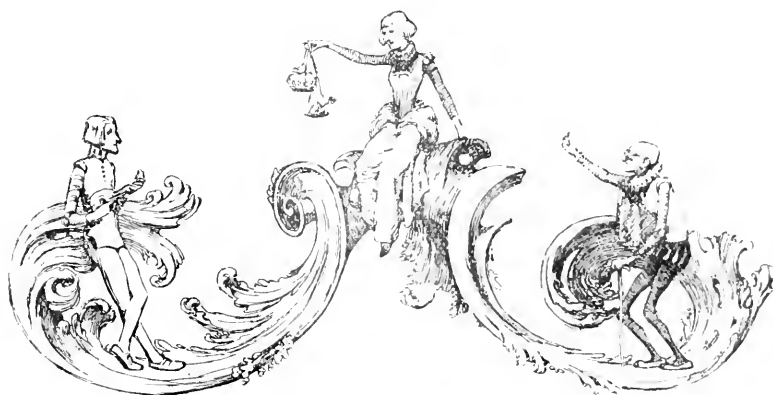
It was this above all things else that made her leave the house of her fathers, the place where her tragedy had been played out, from its heedless beginning to its dreadful, unthought-of end. It was not so common then as now for the wrecked persons of existence to betake themselves over the world to the places where the sun shines brightest and the skies are most blue: but still, when the wars were all well over, it was done by many, and the young widow, with her beautiful child, and her two women attendants, was met with by many people who knew, or were told by those who knew, her strange story, and pitied her with all their hearts. They pitied her for other sufferings than those which were really hers. Those that were attributed to her were common enough and belong to the course of nature: the others were different, but perhaps not less true. But it cannot be denied either that, as there was a certain relief even in the first shock of Lily's grief, a sense of deliverance from difficulties beyond her power to solve, so there was a rising of her heart from its oppression, a rebound of nature and life not too long delayed. Her child made everything easy to her, and made, all the more for coming back to her so suddenly, a new beginning of life. And that life was not unhappy, and had many interests in it notwithstanding the fiery ordeal with which it began.

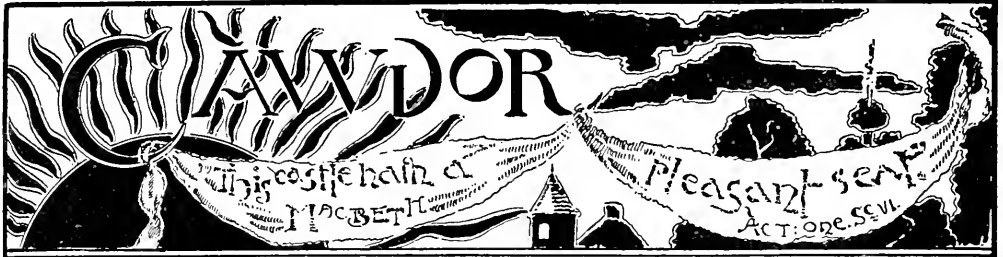
Helen Blythe came back to Kinloch-Rugas within the year, bringing her husband with her. He was not perhaps reformed and made a new

man of, as he vowed he would be in her hands. Perhaps, except in moments of exaltation, she had not expected that. But she did what she had soberly declared to be the mission of many women—she “pulled him through.” They settled upon her little property and farmed it more or less well, more or less ill, according as Alick could be kept “steady,” and Helen’s patience. Two children came, both more or less pathetically careful, from their birth, of their father: and the household, though it bore a chequered existence, was happy on the whole. When Helen saw the Manse under the chill celibate rule of the new minister she was very sorry for him, but entertained no regrets: and when, later in life, he married, the preciseness of the new establishment moved her to many a quiet laugh, and the private conviction—never broken—that, in her own troubled existence, always at full strain with her “wild” Alick but partially reformed, and the many roughnesses of the farmer’s life, her ambitions for her boy, and her comfort in her girl, she was better off than in her old sphere. She did not make her husband perfect, but she pulled him through. Perhaps had she taken the reins of that wild spirit into her hands at first, she might have made him all that could have been wished: but as it was she gave him a possible life, a standing ground when he had been sinking in the waves—a habitation and a name.

Lily came back to the North to establish herself in a house more modern and comfortable, and less heavy with associations than Dalrugas, some years after these events, and there was much friendship between her and the old minister’s daughter, who had been so closely woven with

the most critical moments of her life. They were different in every possible respect, but above all in their view of existence. Helen had her serene faith in her own influence and power to shape the other lives which she felt to be in her charge, to support her always. But to Lily there seemed no power in herself to affect others at all. She—so much more vivacious, stronger, to all appearance, of higher intelligence—had been helpless in her own existence, able for no potent action, swept by the movements of others into one fated path, loved, yet incapable of influencing any who loved her. She was now a great deal better off, her life a great deal brighter, with all manner of good things within her reach, than Helen, on her little bit of land, pushing her rough husband, with as few detours as possible, along the path of life, and smiling over her hard task. Lily was a wealthy woman, with a delightful boy, and all those openings of new hope and interest before her in him which give a woman perhaps a more vivid happiness than anything strictly her own. But the one mother trembled a little, while the other looked forward serenely to an unbroken tranquil course of college prizes and bursaries, and at the end a good Manse, and perhaps a popular position for her son. What should Lily have for hers? She had much greater things to hope for. Would it be hers to stand vaguely in the way of Fate, to put out ineffectual hands, to feel the other currents of life as before sweep her away? Or could she ever stand smiling, like simple Helen, holding the helm, directing the course, conscious of power to defeat all harm and guide towards all good? But that only the course of the years could show.







## CAWDOR CASTLE.

BY EDWIN OLIVER.

"HAIL to thee, Thane of Cawdor!" So rang the beldame's salutation on the greedy ear of Macbeth, and tradition has so weaved around this Highland home the legend which our greatest poet has conceived, that the dissecting knife of modern scepticism strives in vain to part them. There are those leeches of criticism whose mission is to suck dry the warm blood of Romance and leave us but the withered corpse of fact: they batten on the flower of Chivalry and bid us glory in the husks they leave. *Cœur de Lion*, the pride of knight-errantry, becomes in their hands a rowdy, incompetent swash-buckler, while his namesake is canonized on Bosworth Field; Bluff King Hal, from a realized Bluebeard, is metamorphosed into a hardly-used victim of matrimony, and Bonnie Prince Charlie into a bibulous rake. Thus we are assured that not only was the "most bloody piece of work" never perpetrated in any of the strongholds which, by irrefutable proof, claim the honour, but that Duncan was not murdered at all. They would have us believe that Lady Macbeth, nursing vengeance against the king on account of family wrongs wrought by his grandfather and predecessor, Malcolm, incited her husband to rebellion, the Mormaor of Ross and Moray being little loath:

for he had lost his father at the hands of the same Malcolm. He was victorious in a battle, at which "the gracious Duncan" fell, the encounter taking place at Bothgowan, near Elgin, in 1039.

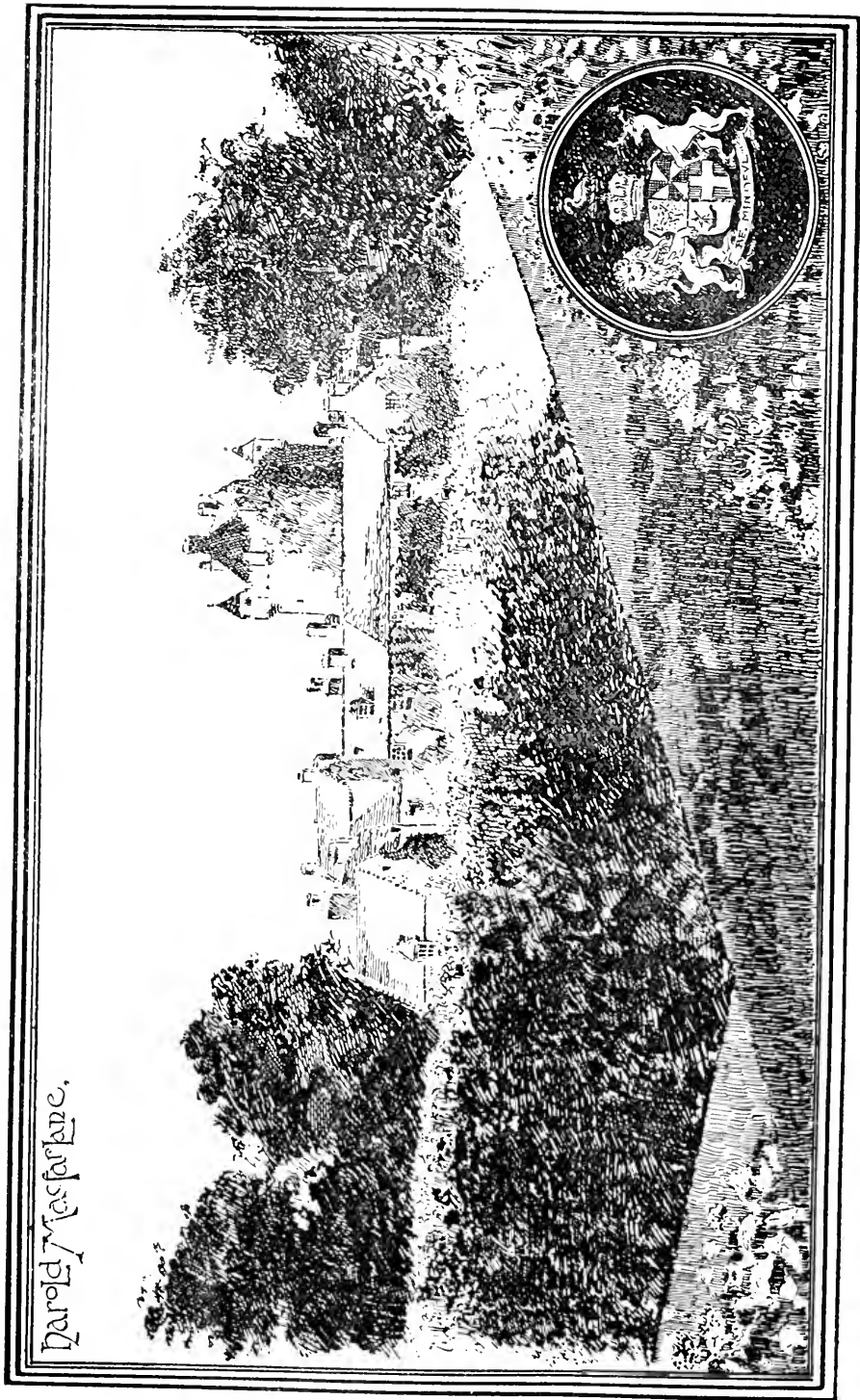
Macbeth was the second husband of the terrible somnambulist: her true name was Graach, and she wedded first Gillacomgan, Mormaor of Moray. He was burned like a rat in his stronghold, with his followers around him: the deed being attributed by some authorities to Macbeth himself. If this be true, there is a curious analogy between the Queen of yore and her later compeer, Mary Stuart: for Gillacomgan read Darnley, and for Macbeth, Bothwell, and the tragedies of the Highland rath and of the Kirk-o-Field wear a striking similitude. The resemblance does not stop here: take the French polish from the Queen of Scots and you have the same overweening ambition, the same wild fury and relentless hate, mingled oddly with crude superstitions and soft feminine touches and contradictions.

"———Had he not resembled  
My father as he slept, I had done't."

And this was the woman who erstwhile deciated her will-power to dash out her helpless baby's brains!

But enough of Mr. Dry-as-Dust: we will have





Caerdydd Castle.

CAWDOR CASTLE.



none of him. Let us back to Cawdor once more and say with Duncan :

"This Castle hath a pleasant seat : the air  
Nimble and sweetly recommends itself  
Unto our gentle senses."

When we in turn visit Inverness and Glamis, we will slay him over again. For the nonce we will pin our faith on those grand old walls, looking proudly over the waving sycamores upon the rushing stream below. At the base of those winding steps we will listen for the stealthy tread of the remorseful queen, muttering weirdly, candle in hand. In King Duncan's room we will see again the royal martyr, stricken low, "his silver skin laced with his goary blood," while the heavy breathing of the drunken watch breaks the sombre silence of the dim chamber.

It has been the laudable aim of the later owners to preserve in its entirety the strength and simplicity of the ancient building. Hence we are able to enter into the life of the fourteenth century with a thoroughness which it is hard to realize in most of the stone travesties of the Dark Ages. Out of the bed of rock rises the same massive keep that Thane William built around the Hawthorn-tree in 1454 ; while the gnarled roots of the tree itself stretch across the vault below, and the topmost branches have sought the light through the arched roof overhead. Upon this famous trunk hangs the Castle legend.

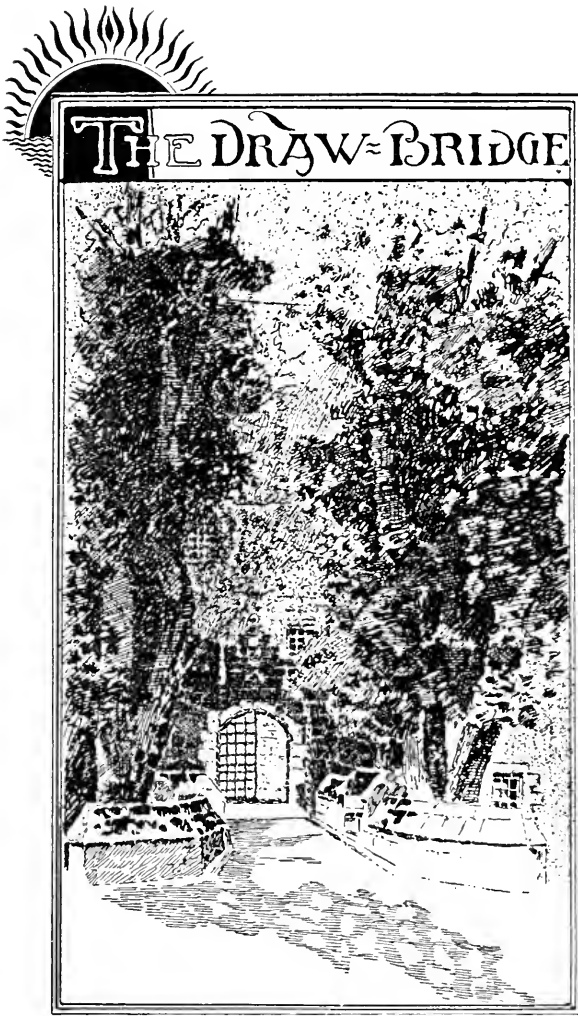
It runs that the founder was led by some occult medium to select his building site by a method which would hardly commend itself to modern architects. He strapped all his worldly wealth upon the back of an ass, and let the animal wander at will, resolving to erect his fortress on the spot where it should first take rest. At length the patient steed drew near to where three hawthorn trees were growing : it passed the first two, the stumps of which were shown as late as half-a-century ago. But lo ! beneath the cooling shelter of the third it bent its weary limbs in peace. The conditions of the revelation being thus fulfilled, the walls speedily grew about the tree in their present form, and the story gave origin to the famous Cawdor toast, which was quaffed beneath its shade : "Freshness to the hawthorn, and prosperity to the line of Cawdor."

It was the same Thane, "King's Chamberlain beyond Thane," and "the loved familiar Squire"

of James II., who, after demolishing the fortress of Lochindorp, carried home on his back, from the moorland ruins, the huge iron "yett," which still bars the entry to the keep.

The old Mormaors, who contributed so generously to the broils and slaughters of early Scotch history, are too remote for sympathetic interest. We may pass on to the event which transferred the lands from the savage Thanes to the present line, the Campbells of Cawdor. Thane William, son of the builder, left behind him five sons : the oldest, from physical defects, was dedicated to the service of Mother Church, and on the second devolved the responsibilities of the earldom. He patched up the long feud between the Houses of Cawdor and Kilravock by marrying the daughter of the latter, but the desired end was ill-achieved, and the young lord's unhappy career ended in 1498, the issue of the marriage being an only daughter. Little Muriel, as the heiress, became the object of family dissension, the four uncles viewing her pretensions with open displeasure. Their attempts to set her aside were futile against the opposition of her powerful protectors, the second Earl of Argyle and Hugh Rose of Kilravock—her uncle on her mother's side—who had been appointed "tutors dative" to her by the King, James IV. Argyle, probably fearing that fouler means might be resorted to, in order to remove her, sent trusty Campbell of Inverliver, with sixty members of the clan, to conduct her to the safe keeping of Inverary. The Campbell of Auchinbeck had been known to observe that the heiress should never be wanting while a yellow-haired maid remained in Cowell : hence, before she was abducted, her identity was secured by her grandmother—the Lady of Kilravock—searing her on the hip : others assert that her nurse bit off a joint of her little finger.

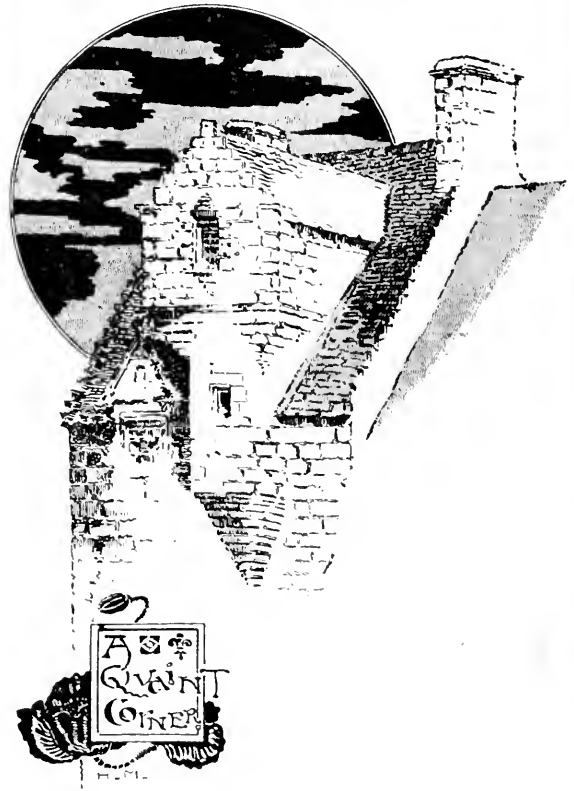
Muriel's escort, however, was overtaken by a strong force of the Calders, under two of her uncles, when they had reached Daltulich in Strathnairn. A subterfuge of the gallant Inverliver saved her : while he turned to face the approaching foe, the lassie was hurried away, and a sheaf of corn, dressed in some of her clothing, was tenderly shielded by a trooper to attract the notice of the pursuers. "It is a far cry to Lochawe," was the famous remark of her protector, "and a distant help to the Campbells." Fierce



was the contest round the cereal dummy, until the young charge was out of danger, and then Inverliver beat a retreat, having lost his seven sons in the fray. Safe at Inverary, she resided with the Campbells until eleven years later she married John of Lorn, third son of the Earl and founder of the present line of Cawdor.

The advent of Sir John to take possession of his wife's estates saw the end of the old Calder stock in the person of Uncle Andrew, who was shot while skulking behind "Calder's Stone," with murderous thoughts in his brain. The new thane ruled there for nearly forty years, acquiring wealth and influence at a startling rate, until he rivalled the Lord of Argyle himself and could claim the allegiance of such stiff-necked clans as the Camerons, McDonalds, McNeills, McLeans, and

McLeods. But too much prosperity was their undoing. The third of the Campbells added Islay to his possessions, and with it bought a heritage of trouble. It was an arduous task, supplanting the MacDonalds, who for centuries had ruled the Island, in the words of Macaulay, "with the pomp of royalty." The obdurate Islesmen would not countenance the parvenus, and for quite a long period actually kept them out of their lawful estate. It was only with the aid of cannon and trained soldiery that the malcontents were subdued, and then victory brought still greater vexation. "The expense of winning and keeping the Island," to quote Mr. Cosmo Innes, "large bribes assuredly exacted by courtiers; others possibly paid to the king for the gift; heavy rents to be made forthcoming while the land was still in the hands of enemies or waste; these causes, added to family expenses, the cost of two establishments, visits to a Court where none were welcome empty-handed, heaped up an amount of debt which in that age—innocent as yet of bills and bank-notes—might have weighed down a better manager than Sir John Campbell." The



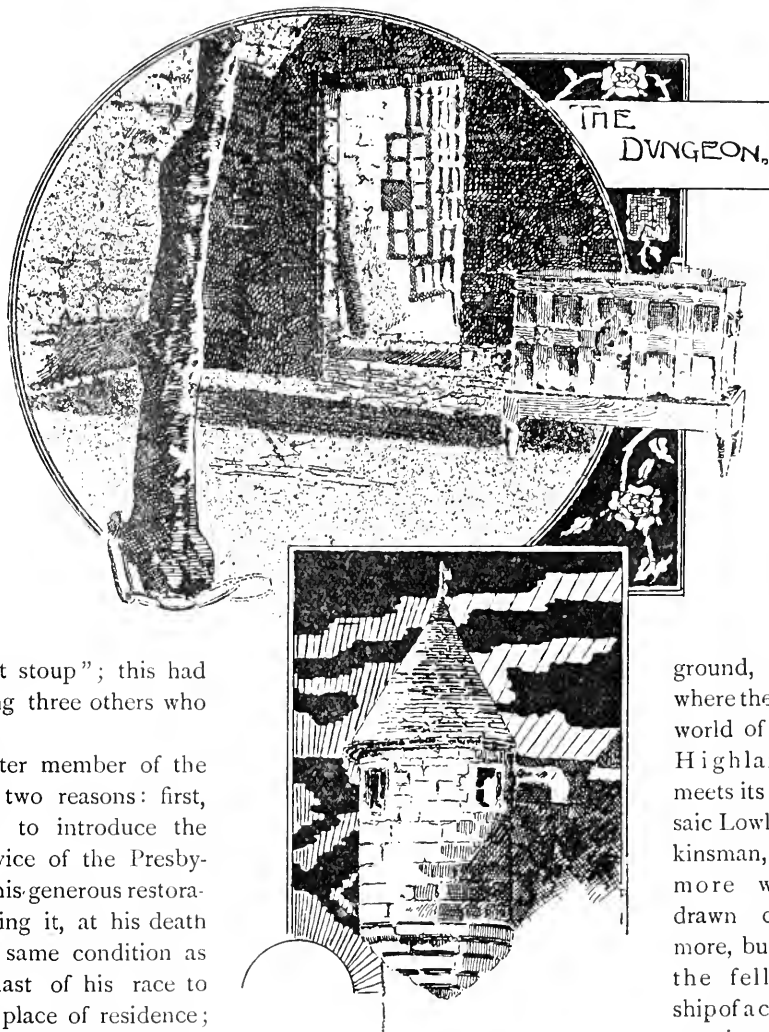
Castle of Cawdor was allowed to fall into disrepair, the doors, roof, and windows falling in, and even the drawbridge being blown away. Not for nearly a century did the family throw off this feudal Frankenstein, when, in 1726, both Islay and Jura were purchased by Campbell of Shawfield for £12,000.

Meanwhile the Castle had been relinquished in 1622 by Sir John to his eldest son, who was called the Fiar of Cawdor. The story goes that a spell was cast upon him by an evil hag, "withered and wild in her attire," whom he met when riding home across the moor from Chanonry. As a result he became a hopeless victim to melancholia, so much so that his young wife, wearying of his company, prepared him "a potion in a quairt stoup"; this had the undesired effect of killing three others who accidentally partook of it.

Sir Hugh Campbell, a later member of the family, gained renown for two reasons: first, for his determined efforts to introduce the Lord's Prayer into the service of the Presbyterian Church; second, for his generous restoration of the old Castle, leaving it, at his death in 1716, in very much the same condition as at present. He was the last of his race to make Cawdor his principal place of residence; his two following successors both married great Welsh heiresses, and since then the name has been even more associated with their Cymric lands than with their old home in the Highlands. The title of Baron in the peerage of Great Britain was conferred on John Campbell in 1790, and his son was created Earl in 1820. The former greatly distinguished himself by his capture, with the aid of the peasantry, of twelve hundred Frenchmen who, in 1797, attacked Fishguard, in Pembrokeshire. The present head of the family and his eldest son, Viscount Emlyn, were both well known in the

House of Commons as Conservative members for Carmarthenshire.

Cawdor Castle is well situated on a low rock that overlooks the rushing burn, *Coille-dur*, lofty trees surrounding it on all sides. It is historical



ground, just where the old world of the Highlands meets its prosaic Lowland kinsman, no more with drawn claymore, but in the fellowship of a common interest

Within easy distances are Forres and Inverness—another authentic home of Macbeth's misdeeds—and the quaint old town of Nairn, where the ancient Thanes dispensed justice or injustice, as the spirit moved them. The Moor of Culloden, where "Butcher Cumberland" stamped out the flickering hopes of Jacobitism, is near by; likewise Macbeth's Hill, where the seeds of fell ambition were first sown. The moor is a desolate tract of table-land, crossed by a carriage drive, on the sides of which are two or three green trenches to mark the site of the battle and the graves



of the patriots. Leaving the village by the bridge across the babbling burn, we pass under the Castle archway, green with age. The only access to the interior is by the draw-bridge, which has hung there through the centuries; the moat remains unaltered, save that its basin is partly filled in. Admittance is gained through the iron-bound gate to the first of the three open courts, on the west of which rises the walls of the great tower, the earliest portion of the building, and venerable in its ivy garb. The iron "yett" of Lochindorb obstructs the way to the lower vault, whose gloomy walls could tell of many a tragedy enacted there. We know it was here Callum Beg, the riever, lingered for his sins. The

long-suffering Nairn-siders had at length caught the slippery thief in company with a neighbour's sheep, and hurried him off to the Castle for justice. He was imprisoned in the dungeon while his judge and accusers discussed the matter over



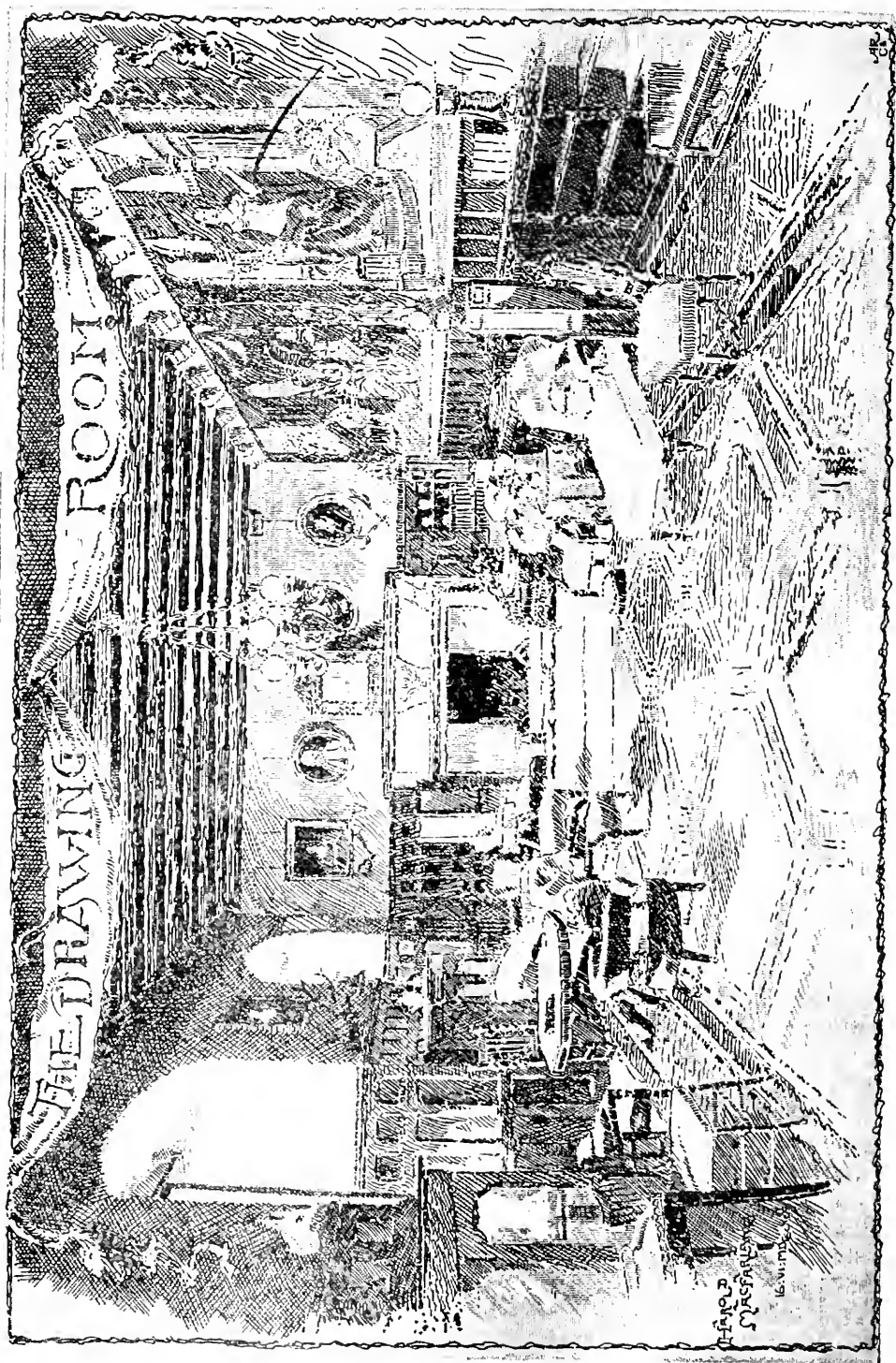
THE  
Dining-room

the plenteous board ; during this period of solitude, a friendly knife was handed in to Callum, with which he was enabled to cut up the object of his theft and pass it through to an eager kennel of dogs beneath the window. This saved his neck for the time being, but the warning had little effect on his hardened soul, for he was shortly after hung by the Laird of Kilravock, despite the Thane's appeal for his life, "as a New Year's Gift." His skeleton, with the fatal rope round his neck, was dug up near the Castle not many years ago.

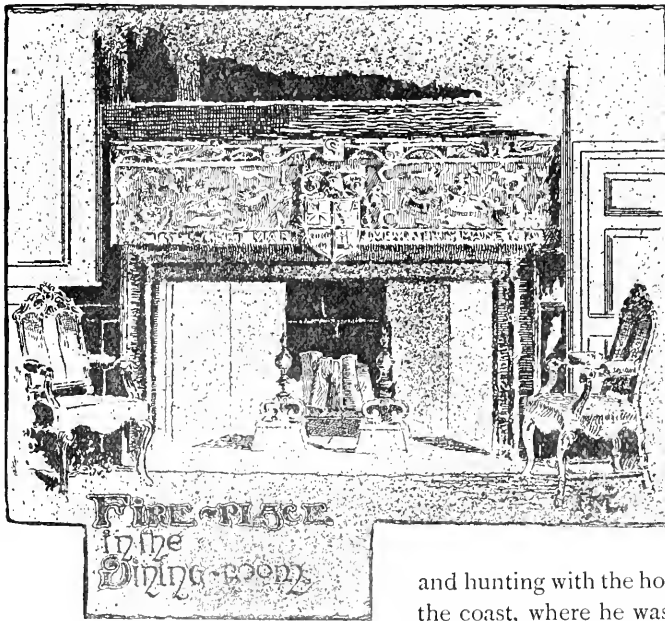
The interior of the tower is composed of three floors, reached by a winding turnpike. The antique "bole-holes" and recesses still remain, but the modern greed for daylight has necessitated windows being bored through the nine feet of wall. The top floor, with its vaulted roof, is named "The Cape House," and was the residence of the steward, whose elementary method of summoning his understrappers was by blowing a horn on the bartisan. The room below is quite the showplace of the Castle, being "King Dun-

can's Chamber," shorn now of its greatest treasure, the bed on which the blow was dealt. It was destroyed during the fire in 1815, which was caused by the rooks building in the chimney. But there are still left the charcoal frescoes on the walls, illustrating scenes from the tragedy, and the king's chain armour, together with the key of the wicket at which Macduff thundered in the dead of night. The tower is eighty feet in height, being surmounted by conical-roofed





turrets, with circular bases and octagonal crests. The growth of the Castle has been gradual, increasing with the needs of the family. The portion next in sequence to the tower is the western side, where the light is sparsely admitted through narrow slits in the walls. This wing, which is in three storeys, extends along the bank of the brook for over two hundred feet. It contains some of the principal living apartments, among which special mention must be made of the dining room with its wainscoted walls and curious tapestries. The chief feature of interest in this chamber is the sculptured mantel-piece, the playful fancy of the artist having run riot among the figures of the design. Not the least remarkable is the form of a fox enjoying the pleasures of a pipe, the date carved on the work being 1510—some seventy years earlier than the authentic introduction of the gentle weed to our land! The initials S.I.C. and D. M. C. refer to the union of the Campbells with the heiress of the



Calders. Another fine piece of sculpture is seen on the mantel of the adjoining Morning Room, but it is of modern workmanship. Gobelin and Dutch tapestries adorn the walls. Below is the great kitchen, with its long, uneven floor made out of the rock itself: the indifferent light from the recesses of the windows gives it more the air of a cathedral crypt than the shrine of gastronomy.

The drawing-room occupies the greater part of the north side: it was known in days of yore as the Great Hall, and is of superb dimensions. The furniture is as it should be—out of date and comfortless. The walls are draped with tapestries depicting allegorical subjects, and one side is occupied by the "Fiddler's Gallery." Above the great fireplace are portraits of Sir Hugh and his

wife, to whom the Castle owes so much. The ceiling is supported by huge joists of Scotch fir which rest on stone brackets.

Over this chamber is the state bedroom—a ghostly-looking apartment, hung with Flemish draperies, which are thus described in the Castle accounts: "suit of arras hangings of wirsit mixt with silk for my Lady's State Bedroom." Behind these lurk secret doors let into the bare stone walls. One of the "sights" shown to visitors is a curious secret chamber in the roof above the entrance staircase, wherein lay concealed "the old fox, Lovat," when the hue and cry for him after Culloden, was keenest. It is formed

in the rafters of the vaulted chamber which is reserved for the Castle papers of value and interest: access is gained by a narrow passage along the outer gutters, and a stone stairway up the roof.

From this snug hole the aged schemer (who for half-a-century had succeeded so well in fulfilling the proverbial task of running with the hare

and hunting with the hounds) made his way to the coast, where he was found by a detachment of the king's troops, ensconced in the

hollow of a tree. The end of this remarkable man is worth narrating. Finding that his clever defence was powerless to save him, he threw aside the mask of cringing subservency, and looked death boldly in the face. When sentence of death was passed, he turned airily to his judges, saying, "I bid your lordships an everlasting farewell! Sure I am, we shall never all meet again in the same place" The infirmity of his advanced age required the assistance of two warders to mount the scaffold. When there, he looked scoffingly round on the vast multitude who had gathered to see him die, remarking: "God save us, why should there be such a hustle about taking off an old grey head from a man who cannot get up three steps without two assistants!"

## MY FAVOURITE BROTHER.

BY EVELYN SHARP.

I HARDLY know his claim to the distinction. He was a little older than I was, just enough to add to the halo through which I viewed him, and not enough to destroy our comradeship; and he bullied me more than all the others combined. That was clearly my own fault, however—I was his abject slave, and he took advantage of it. Some people would say that this was only human nature: if so, my favourite brother was composed entirely of human nature.

I only once remember his showing me any manly consideration, and that was one day when we had been sent down to the drawing-room in our best clothes, to see some visitors. Nurse always complained that we did not hold hands and walk nicely like other children. We never met the "other children" she was so fond of talking about, but nurse seemed to have passed her life with them. On this particular occasion, at all events, we had raced downstairs from the top of the house, and Jack had beaten me because he had taken the baluster side, as he always did—but when he arrived breathless on the mat outside the drawing-room door, he became suddenly polite and waited for me.

"Ladies first," he said, with a grin, and stood aside.

"It isn't, I'm not going to, it's a great shame," I retorted, intermittently.

My weapons of defence were limited owing to my want of breath, and the proximity of the drawing-room. So I stamped on his foot as hard as I could, and as I came on the buckle of his best shoe and hurt myself much more than him, I stamped again, very angrily, and not on the buckle. Jack's methods of revenge were always prompt and successful. He flung the door open and pushed me adroitly forward, so that I had knocked over a vase of flowers and shocked an old lady, before he entered the room, looking perfectly unconscious.

Once, only once, do I remember outwitting him. We had a dinner-party, and he dared me to walk downstairs in my nightgown and touch the dining-room door handle.

"I'm not frightened, Jack, of course I'm not, but—

but you'll come too, won't you?" I said, cunningly.

He had his reputation to support, so he began to treat amicably.

"I'll come half-way to see that you don't cheat," he said generously, "and when you come back you can have that bit of barley-sugar I left in the pin tray. You can really, so look sharp."

I knew the antecedents of the barley-sugar, and loudly declined to be rewarded; and off we pattered barefoot along the passage and down the stairs. If our nurses had not temporarily quitted their professional capacity to wash forks and plates in the back hall, we should never have escaped observation, but as it was, I reached the goal triumphantly, and turned to rush upstairs again—just as the door opened, and the ladies came out from dessert. I was very young indeed, but I remember the instinct with which I avoided my nearest and dearest in that crowd of astonished faces, and how I flung myself on the mercy of the strangers instead. The stratagem succeeded wonderfully well, and I was finally carried up to bed with a total immunity from punishment, and laden with cakes and sweets. Jack, who had been snoring loudly until the light was taken away, at once woke up when we were left alone, and prepared to be sufficiently friendly to secure some of the spoil.

"I say, you were a brick not to run away, Becky, and I'm sorry I wasn't near enough to help you out. I am really, you know."

I made no advances in return, so he came straight to the point.

"I say, tell me what you're eating, Becky?"

"Preserved cherries," I replied, elated with victory, "but I shan't give you any, because you ran away."

"I didn't run away, you know I didn't, it was part of the game," shouted Jack, angrily. "It wouldn't have been any fun if I had come too. And you might give me some, Becky, because I thought of the whole thing."

"You've got your barley-sugar," I said, rather meanly.

"I hate barley-sugar. And it's been in the glue-pot twice," said Jack, sullenly.



I believe my resistance was short-lived, and Jack had his share of the booty; but I made plenty of capital out of the dinner-party episode by referring to it whenever he became specially tyrannical. In my own way, perhaps, I had as many means of defence as he had.

When he was sent to school, I was inconsolable. Jack, who had been given a Waterbury watch, and a knife with three blades and a corkscrew, and who was being thoroughly spoiled by everyone in the house in view of his approaching fate, was singularly cheerful, and laughed at my grief. However, he probably saw in it an opportunity for getting something out of me, so he came up to me as I sat on the nursery floor dissolved in tears, and put his arm round my neck.

"Never mind, Becky, there are the holidays, you know," he whispered.

"They'll n-never c-come," I sobbed.

"Never's a long word," he said, grandly. It was what nurse used to say to us whenever we complained that we never had cake for tea, so I was not impressed by his borrowed aphorism: I was still raw and uncultured in my ideas, and I felt that it was really necessary to be original. "Would you like to give me something for a keepsake, Becky?" Jack added, insinuatingly.

"What do you want?" I asked, suspiciously, and stopped crying to be on the defensive.

"I don't want anything," he replied, in an injured tone, "it's only to remind me of you, don't you see, and——"

"You haven't given *me* anything for a keepsake," I interrupted.

"Oh, well, of course, you won't forget *me*," he said, confidently. I might have pointed out his egotism to him, but I didn't: my energies were needed in another direction.

"I know what you want, Jack, it's my new pencil-case, and you're not going to have it," and I began to wail again to re-establish my claim on his consideration. But Jack strolled away to the window, and whistled cheerfully.

"The carriage is at the door, so good-bye, Becky," he sung out presently.

The carriage was not there, and he knew it was not, but I sprang to my feet and crammed my pencil-case, and my little china dog without a tail, and my only peppermint drop, into the pocket of his new coat. Jack was instantly melted, and in

an unguarded moment of generosity, he proffered me his old knife with the broken blade.

"Oh no, I couldn't really, Jack. Thanks awfully all the same," I protested, and clung to his clean collar convulsively.

"Oh yes, do take it, I really mean it," said Jack, becoming very much more pressing as he saw no chance of my accepting it. "You couldn't cut your finger with it if you tried. Here you are, Becky."

"No, no," I said, and kept my eyes averted heroically, and Jack restored it to his pocket, looking immensely relieved, and allowed himself to become demonstrative as no one was there to overhear him.

"We shan't have any more rides on the rocking-horse, Becky. At least, of course you will," and he sighed self-pityingly.

"I shall never ride on it alone, Jack, I promise you I won't," I hastened to assure him.

"I wish I was a girl and could stop at home and do nothing but enjoy myself," said Jack presently.

I thought of the Waterbury watch and the new knife with the three blades and the corkscrew, and I began to feel that school had its compensations, but I would not have said so for the world.

"There are the holidays," I murmured.

"*Holidays!*" he said scornfully. "What's the use of holidays when a chap's been half killed with hard work?"

I could not think of a suitable reply, so I tried to raise another sob which was not a success. The situation was becoming strained, and Jack pulled out his watch for the twentieth time.

"Three o'clock! I say, I shall never catch my train," he cried importantly.

"The hall clock has just struck two, I heard it. Your watch isn't any good," I said, rather unnecessarily; but I was glad to find that even Waterbury watches have their failings.

"What awful rot, it's gained an hour since breakfast," said Jack, suddenly bereft of his importance; and I felt in a position to patronise him slightly, while he knocked it on the edge of the table and wished he could get at the works, which of course would have set it right at once.

He went away without a tear; and I wept over the prickly and scanty mane of the rocking-horse, until it struck me that I might as well begin

writing to Jack at once, so that he should have a letter to console him soon after he arrived at the abode which was said to hold so many torments and miseries.

This was my letter:—

"My dear Jack,—I hope you are quite well. I am quite well. Nurse has the Headache. How is your knife? The Rokkinghorse is quite Well. Now I must say good-bye. Hoping you are Quite well, I remain, Your loving sister, BECKY."

I felt that that would certainly cheer him up, and Nurse promised to send it to him, which I have since had reason to believe she never did; and she then gave me her photograph album to look at, and told me how she and her little sister once had scarlet fever and measles in the same year. And cook sent me up a home-made loaf for tea, with my name inscribed on it in currants; so that on the whole I felt very distinguished indeed.

Jack never wrote to me until the week before he came home for Christmas, and I have the letter still. This is how it runs:—

"Dear Becky,—I shall leave this hole on satterday it is a beastly hole i wish i was a gurl like you with nothing to do all day cum to the station to meet me only mind you don't kiss me if any of the chaps are about tell nurse to have jam for tea on satterday and don't forget to ask mother to order apple pie for sunday we never have anything but rice pudding here it is a stingy hole you are lucky to be a gurl i wish i was a gurl too i want a stamp album for a christmas pressent also a cattapult and sum african soldiers solid ones that cum off their horses also a canon that fires reel gunpowder and some wite mice goodbye don't forget about the kissing, Jack."

I thought it was the most beautiful letter that had ever been written, and I took it to bed with me every night, and I read it to the rocking-horse every morning. And mother said he had got on wonderfully well with his writing, but I was not surprised for I always knew that Jack was a genius.

I spent the whole of Saturday morning in decorating his bed-room with holly, and I painted "Welcome Home" in shaky red letters on white paper and pinned it over the nursery door, and I thought twelve o'clock would never come, and when it did come and I was seated in the carriage

with mother, I thought Paddington Station would never come either.

I soon discovered Jack among the crowd of passengers on the platform. He stood in the midst of a group of other boys, and he recognised my appearance with a lordly nod. With the greatest difficulty I resisted my impulse to embrace him, and I was seized with an awkward feeling of shyness when one of his companions asked him who the kid with the big eyes was.

"Come here, Becky," said Jack condescendingly, "Simpson wants to know you." And in case I did not realise the full importance of Simpson's acquaintance, he added in a whisper, "Simpson's our captain, you know."

"Oh," I exclaimed, suddenly forgetting my shyness and putting out my hand to the great man, "and are you really head of the whole school?"

Simpson blushed, and said he rather thought not, and his companions began laughing, and Jack explained in a contemptuous tone that Simpson based his reputation on football and not on the classics. On the whole, I was rather glad when the hero's oppressive presence was removed, and Jack and I were really alone together, for he then became suddenly natural and asked what there was for dinner and whether I had remembered about the white mice. He did not think much of the "Welcome Home," and began telling me about the decorations they had had in the big school-room for the break-up supper, and he did not notice the holly at all until I drew his attention to it.

"You should have seen the wreath Simpson nailed up over the doorway; it was a ripping wreath, all covered with crystallised stuff to look like snow. That was a wreath if you like," he said.

I suggested that we should have a ride on the rocking-horse before dinner, and added proudly that I had kept my promise.

"Promise? What promise? I don't want to ride on that rotten thing. Rocking-horses are beastly rot, Simpson's got a real pony, and he hunts. When will dinner be ready?"

He complained of being obliged to have dinner in the nursery until I suggested that he would probably get more to eat than in the dining-room, which mollified him temporarily, although he said that Simpson always had late dinner and drank sherry. I would not own to myself that Jack had

changed, but I felt that Simpson had somehow come between us, and my feelings of jealousy towards the great football hero were not diminished when Jack actually went to spend a whole week of his precious Christmas holidays at Simpson's country home.

We went to bowl our hoops in the square one day, soon after his return from his visit.

"Bowling hoops is awfully poor fun after hunting," said Jack.

I had been enjoying myself immensely, but I humbly assented, and proposed a race to the gate and back instead. It generally put Jack in a good temper to have a race with me because he could beat me so easily. But to-day he only kicked holes in the gravel and began talking about Simpson's sister. Simpson's sister had been added to Simpson since that fateful visit, and I was beginning to acquire an awful hatred for the whole clan of Simpson.

"It's no sport racing with you, you can't race a bit," he said scornfully; "you should just see Simpson's sister run: it's a ripping sight, you bet!"

"I don't believe she can run so awfully well," I said sorrowfully, "she's sixteen, so her dresses must be long."

"Long? That's all you know about it," cried Jack, "why, they're miles off the ground, *miles*! She wears gaiters or something, and when she runs—oh! it just reminds you of that Greek Johnny, the one with the bow and arrows, don't you know?"

I had never heard of Diana, but I felt that the Simpson mania was getting a little too much, and I cried out passionately, "I am sick of Simpson, and Simpson's sister, and Simpson's pony, and all the horrid family of Simpsons!" and Jack did not speak to me again all day.

But nurse unaccountably took my part, and I overheard her telling mother that "it was not the child's fault at all, and Master Jack ought to be spoke to," after which I felt compelled to be more miserable than before. Nurse also gave me red-currant jelly on my bread and butter at tea, until my heart fairly warmed towards the house of Simpson, and I was quite ready to respond when Jack began making awkward advances.

"I say, Becky, I didn't mean what I said, don't you know," he began, standing in front of me with his hands in his pockets and his legs very wide apart. I was sitting astride on the rocking-horse to intimate that *my* skirts did not incommode me in any way.

"It's all right, Jack, I didn't mind—much," I replied.

"Then be friends again, will you, Becky? It's so beastly dull when you're not," said Jack, candidly. But as he climbed up on the rocking-horse behind me and rubbed his cheek against mine, and repeated that he was very sorry and that he would not talk about the Simpsons any more, I at once gave up the concession I had been fighting for all day, and said he might talk about them as much as he liked.

"And you see, I haven't met Simpson's sister, so I don't really know what she is like," I added, in a burst of generosity.

"No you don't," he said, gravely, "but after all, I wouldn't have her for a sister, Becky, she's so smart that she doesn't give a fellow a chance. And she doesn't give in to a fellow either. Oh no, I wouldn't have her for a sister."

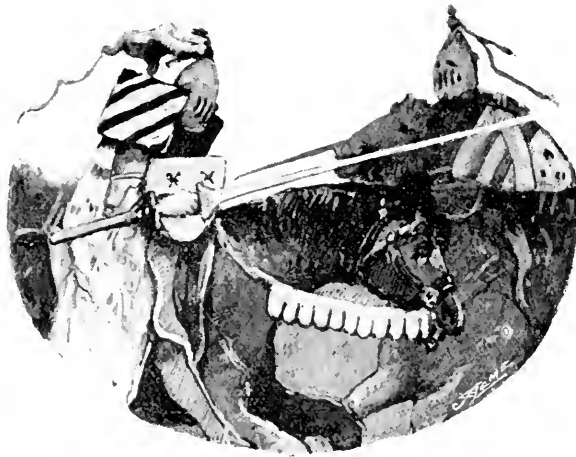
I positively loved Simpson's sister at that moment, and when Jack went further still, and confessed that late dinner was an awful bore because the butler stared so horribly, and you never knew what the grub was made of, I slipped off the horse and went to beg nurse for a whole slice of bread and butter and red currant jelly; and we turned the rocking-horse into a ship, and stocked it with the red-currant jelly, and were shipwrecked on the nursery rug, and lived on the red currant jelly until we were rescued, about bedtime, by a passing ship who wore a white cap and spectacles and would not enter into the game at all.

When he came home for the summer holidays I stifled my animosity and inquired after Simpson.

"Simpson? Who's Simpson? Oh, that chap. Oh, he's all right, I suppose; I never see him now. I say, I've asked Jackson down for a few days, Becky. Jackson's a spiffing chap, Becky, carried his bat for fifty-nine in our match with Sherwood's house last week. You must be awfully nice to him, Becky, and not ask him too many questions, because he's Jackson, you know, and Jackson doesn't like girls, of course. And besides, it's awfully good of him to come at all: Jackson doesn't go everywhere, you know. Lots of the fellows would give their heads to get Jackson to stay with them."

N.B.—Is it necessary to add that Jackson was afterwards dethroned by Thompson?

Simpson, thou art avenged!



A JOUST.

## AMUSEMENTS IN THE OLDEN TIMES.

BY H. A. PAGE.

IN the middle ages, much more than with us, amusements were, on the one hand, allied with sports, and on the other much more associated with the ordinary on-goings of life. As it is now, so it was then, but in a more universal sense, the man that could broadly amuse and raise a laugh was the man to be welcomed and rewarded. Hence the great interest in three classes—the pedlars and the pilgrims and the minstrels—not to mention a fourth—the fools—who, however, pertained more to the rich and privileged. But the pedlar had something for everybody—a fellow of infinite jest and humour. He could tell a story and crack a joke as he unrolled the surprises and novelties from his knapsack ; and his easy talk, full of gossip and news from the nearest parishes, no doubt helped him to profitable sales. Then the pilgrims, when they returned home, had much to tell of wonders seen in the towns, and of incidents by the way : and they had their counterpart in the *jongleurs* or jugglers\*—the “merry men,” who tramped from place to place, amusing the wayfarers at a wayside inn, or in their little booth at the village green or fair, giving the rustics a turn. Then there was the minstrel, with his song, the enjoyment of which was not always

limited to castle or court, the people yielded him a rich harvest of their scanty means, and such harbour and food as they had.

These were the daily newspapers of the time—their *Punch* or comic paper, as well as their theatre or music hall. The higher class felt all the need of relief and fun as much as the lower, but they had, of course, more immediate, if not better, means of gratifying the desire. One illustration of it is the institution of the fool or jester. He was a most influential and necessary, if not, indeed, a great personage in those days, and was, in many cases, more familiar with the lord and his secrets and had more freedom granted to him in certain ways than any other dependant. The business of the fool was often earnest enough in its end, though the means had to be humorous, if not comic. It was to furnish a kind of rough commentary on life, and a correction of excesses and absurdities—naïf criticism, we might call it, on the excesses and follies of life. If poetry is a criticism of life, as Mr. Matthew Arnold was fain to have it, then the fool was often a poet : for his business was criticism of life as he found it. And we should be very far wrong if we went away with the idea that the fool in those days was only a kind of privileged half-wit. By no means : he was not seldom a man of true gift, incisive insight, readiness, and felicity of expression. He was precisely of the type that would now play comedy at Toole's or the Gaiety or the Garrick. The great lord had to get his comedy at the fireside, in the hall,

\* *Jongleurs* or *jogleurs*, from the Latin *joculatoris*, and this again from *jocus*, a game. Hence comes our word *juggler*. In the Crusades the *jongleurs* of the West met those of the East, and learned much from them—many new arts of sleight-of-hand, and tricks numberless, which they duly turned to account, descending more and more, however, to mountebanks in the process.

at hunting, or in travel, and it was the legitimate business of the fool to supply it. He made himself central to the company for the nonce, and, at his own sweet will, translated them into fellow-players and audience, as his bent was, for the benefit of the party in the private box—his master and his friends. Nor did the sayings and doings of the fool pass as protected property. The best and boldest of his hits and jokes and rejoinders became common, and passed from mouth to mouth, as in Scotland more particularly we find that, up to a comparatively recent date, the stories handed down of the Laird of Udny's fool, formed the most interesting and popular of broadsheets. For the upper classes there were many indoor games, perhaps, too, some gambling, that is, betting at play. Chess was a great favourite, and knights and squires, gentlemen and ladies, were proficient in it—the chessmen, just as in our day, having sometimes a good deal of artistic skill spent upon them, so that they were ornamental as well as useful. Dice, too, and draughts had their patrons, and tables and backgammon came in for variety. In the later period, cards had their

own place, and sometimes fortune-telling or divining was practised by their aid. A game of balls or an easy dance for greater exercise, and whipping tops was practised by others besides mere children. If the ladies felt anything of what we now-a-days call *ennui*, they could turn for a bit of relief to the spinning or the carding, which it was not *infra dig* for a lady of high rank to indulge in, or they might pleasure themselves by singing a song to the accompaniment of the rebeck, the lute, or the cithern.

For the common crowd there were the Robin

Hood Games and the Festivals of the Lords of Misrule, cock-fighting, bouts of bull-baiting and bear-baiting,\* and every Sunday from April to October the men of the rural parish had to gather at the bow-butts, and shoot each of them at least six shots to keep their hand well in at the bow and arrow or the cross-bow. And in England the first of May was a great time for feast and fun and mummary, not forgetting the Maypole, for then summer was welcomed in. All were summoned to the greenwood, from which each brought back green branches, and among many plays and exhibi-

tions St. George and the Dragon was sure to be rudely represented. Fairs were then realities, and often lasted a week or even more. And there was hoodman blind, and frog in the middle, and kiss in the ring, sometimes rough and tumble enough, you may be sure, and hot-cockles†, and shepherds and shepherdesses, and many more of the same kind. And then for manly amusements there were quintain, and tilting at the ring, and a kind of quoits.

Then there were the miracle-plays, especially on to about Easter, and at Whitsuntide or Pentecost, at which latter the descent of the Holy

Ghost was always represented by the flying of a white dove—from which, some say, the name of Whitsuntide was derived. The miracle-plays were, of course,



THE CUP AND BALL.

\* In London the "bolle-baitynge theatre," near the "beare-baitynge house," was nigh to the locality of the present London Bridge. Cock-fighting was a London pastime in 1190.

† The nature of the game of Hot-Cockles may be inferred from this verse, from Gay:—

"As at Hot-Cockles once I laid me down,  
And felt the weighty hand of many a clown,  
Buxoma got a gentle tap, and I  
Quick rose and read soft mischief in her eye."

originally set up by the monks for edification, but more and more they became mere sources of pastime and amusement, in which Satan, with tail and talons, was a comic butt, and Judas and many others were sources of fun and laughter. So sometimes familiarity breeds contempt, and reverence and fear give place to laughter and ironical comment.

And then there were the joust, the tilt, the tournament, which formed for these days what we may call the make-believe of chivalry. The delight and excitement of these celebrations were not by any means all for the upper classes. All ranks were there, from the lowest to the highest. Many descriptions and rhymes could be cited in proof. Here is one specimen, attesting fully the truth of what we have said :—

"Knights with a long  
retinue of squires  
In gaudy liveries  
march, and quaint  
attires,

One laid the helm, an-  
other held the lance,  
A third the shining  
buckler did ad-  
vance ;

The coursers pawed  
the ground with  
restless bit :

The smiths and arm-  
ourers on palfreys  
ride,

Files in their hands and hammers by their side,  
And nails for loosened spears, and thongs for shields  
The yeomen guard the streets in seemly bands, [provide :  
And clowns come crowding round, with cudgels in  
their hands."

The tournament was the encounter in which many knights engaged, the joust was the contest in which two knights only appeared to try which was the better man. Not as though the enterprises were wholly void of danger—a man in being unhorsed, thrown with force to the ground, with his heavy armour, might often be severely stunned, and even wounded if the spear in contact found any of the joints in his armour. We read of men even killed in the jousts and tilts, however, and lovers of the "Idylls of the King" will remember that the little novice, who garrulously

chatters to Queen Guinevere, in the nunnery, unknowingly nigh breaking the Queen's heart with her simple talk, says of her father :—

"——One

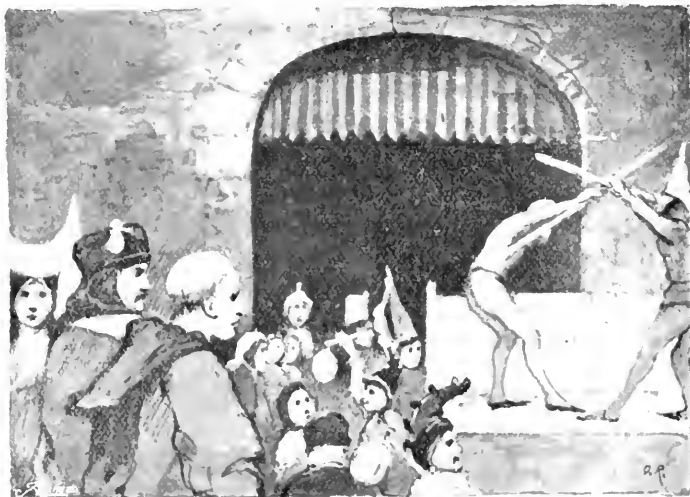
Of noblest manners, though himself would say,  
That Lancelot was the noblest, and he died,  
*Killed in a tilt*, come next, five summers back,  
And left me."

But to wound or seriously injure, not to say to kill a man, was not the first aim of these displays.—their main purpose was show, pastime, exercise, and drill : to keep the knights and squires, etc., up to the mark in actual practice of arms. They stood to those days very much as the Autumn

Manceuvres do to ours, and exactly as the Sunday shooting at the butts does to the rifle-contests at New Wimbledon.

The great tournament which was given in Scotland, by the gallant Earl of Eglintoun, in 1839 (when the Duchess of Somerset was Queen of Beauty, and Louis Napoleon, Emperor of France, was one of the visitors who appeared, arrayed in mediæval costume or armour) was just as serious, and aimed at just as much real effect as they did. Lord Tennyson, in his "Idylls of the King," has well described them, over and over again ; for, though in their true form, they were not introduced into England till after the Norman Conquest, yet it is evident that something approaching to them in character must have existed before that time, and, broadly speaking, Lord Tennyson draws his pictures on the basis of facts known to us of the early middle ages.

The country-folk—in as near an imitation of knightly exercises as they were allowed to come—had cultivated a rude kind of fencing, which was often accompanied by much horse-play. Quarter-staff and cudgelling were their delights in this line,



QUARTER-STAFF.

The country-folk—in as near an imitation of knightly exercises as they were allowed to come—had cultivated a rude kind of fencing, which was often accompanied by much horse-play. Quarter-staff and cudgelling were their delights in this line,

and they did not disappear in favour of fisticuffs till a comparatively late period, and no greater protection was allowed than a leather jerkin or quilted coat of linen or coarse cloth.

And then there were the fairs, with all their accompaniments of sights and shows and fun and frolic and diversion, to which the people flocked from all the country round. Dr. Jessopp has written well of some points in middle-age history; but we think he must be guilty of the logical error of generalising from too narrow a basis of particulars when he is fain to have us believe that the common people of those days had really no amusements. He seriously writes:—

“Hunting for the hens in the furze-brake, digging out a fox or badger, gave them a bout of excitement now and again. Now and then a wandering minstrel came by, playing upon his rude instrument. Now and then somebody would come out from Lynn, or Yarmouth, or Norwich, possibly with some new batch of songs, for the most part scurrilous and coarse, and listened to much less for the sake of the music than of the words.”\*

But what then of the fairs? As we have suggested: were they not frequented by all and sundry? What of the miracle-plays and the peep-show adaptations from them, and the plays that succeeded them? He says well that there were

many non-resident parsons; that even where there was a parson, there was no wife or sister or daughter to visit and to take an interest in the people, and that the monks did not supply the place of them, and so on. But for all that, we believe in rough and ready amusements; and all the more because the people were so much left to themselves in these respects, and with the full sense of their being so.

There was, doubtless, merriment, else life would have been found insupportable by many;

but it was coarse and often wanton, and worse—but what could you expect? In our day, don't the labouring people—the rustics, ill-housed, spend their evenings in the ale-houses when they can? and don't the hard-working folks of towns take it out in fun and frolic when they can—too often, alas, in the low beer-shops and public-houses? One advantage, at least, the peasants had then—there was no vile grog, and the beer was not heady, and this on

Dr. Jessopp's own showing, and in this, at all events in the old days, they had

the advantage of us.

The whole character of the fairs bears witness to the vast crowds which thronged to them from all around—sometimes from considerable distances. The men who set up stalls in the fairs, or walked with their wares on trays before them, were great in *patter*, as the phrase goes now—a



THE MAYPOLE.

\* Coming of the Friars, p. 104.

thing which could only succeed with the ignorant and coarse, with whom a joke and a snatch of coarseness go for so much; and in these dealers, as we know, the "grace of guile" was a good capital. In the  
of Piers



man,"  
land  
Covetous

"Vision  
the Plow-

Lang-  
makes  
say:—

ARCHERY.

"First I learned to lye,  
Wikkedly to weye  
Was my first lesson:  
To Wy and Wynchestre  
I went to the fayre,  
With many manere marchaundise,  
As my maister me highte;  
Ne hadde the grace of gyle y-go  
Amonges my chaffare,  
It had ben unsolded this seven yer—  
So me God helpe."

Social conditions, at all events to a certain extent, may be read in legislative enactments, or there is nothing relative in history. In the reign of Edward III. Acts were passed forbidding the subjects of his Majesty to spend so much time in draughts, dice, bull-baiting, cock-fighting, football and other games and amusements, on the ground, plainly and freely expressed, that they took up too much time which would have been better spent in military exercises, in archery, etc. So we see the pressure of amusement coming into conflict even with the due training for arms. Surely this fact should count for something. Dr. Cunningham is with us here as well as Mr. Matthew Browne, and we prefer to go with them to going, in this instance, with Dr. Jessopp. Dr. Cunningham writes: "Life is more than meat, and,

though badly housed, the ordinary villager was better fed and amused."\*

For amusement associated with sport, the folks of the middle ages had ample variety. There were boars and wolves to be killed to make the ways safer, foxes in great numbers, and, though the villeins had little direct share in these amusements any more than they have now, they often had their share of the pleasure in observing it and hearing of it. The deer which ran wild in the forests was the great prize, and in days before the invention of gunpowder, endurance as well as skill was required to procure it. Horn and hound go well together, and nothing in all the panorama of the middle-age life is more attractive and picturesque than the barons setting out at early morn to hunt the stag, the inevitable jester or fool, with cap and bells, forming an invariable and striking figure in the picture.

And then, when the king visited any favourite forest for hunting, what a turn-out there was! All alike seemed fain to aid were alive, cortege, with dresses, woods a may besure, more than vocal.



A HOODED HAWK.

There was the hunting of hares and rabbits too. The ladies, in parties by themselves, would indulge in this sport, and very quaint are some of the pictures showing them in the act of shooting impossible arrows from tiny cross-bows.

\* Growth of Industry and Commerce, p. 275.

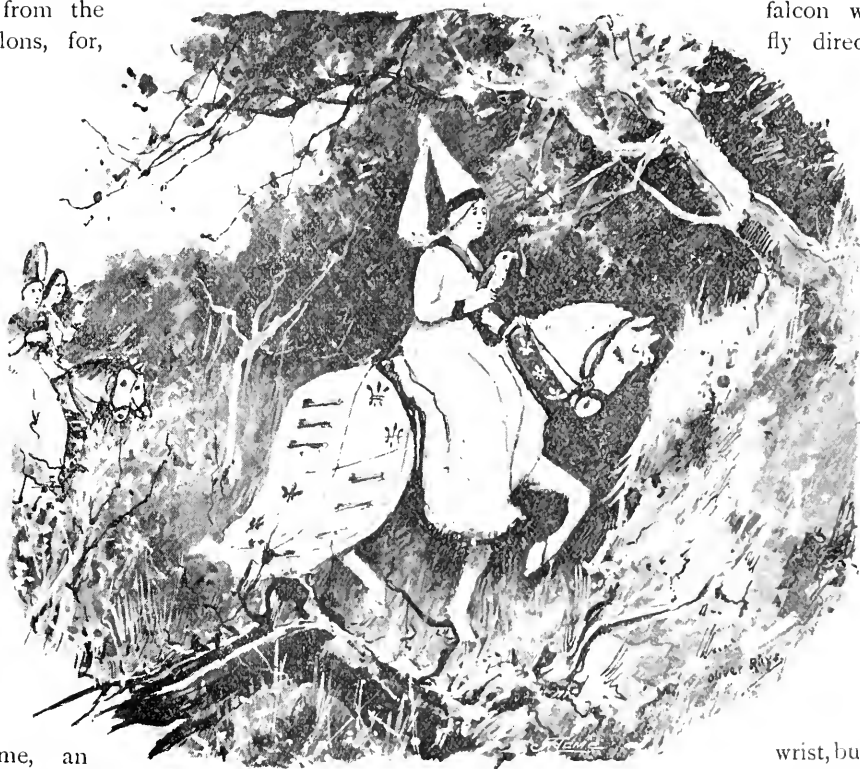


But the procession setting out for the hawking is perhaps one of the prettiest pictures from the life of the middle-ages. There they go, mounted or on foot, knights and ladies, with their favourite hawks hooded on their wrists, held by their jesses ; the falconers with their burdens, and the pages, long-haired, with their airy looks. A pleasant company bound for a pleasant sport, of which gunpowder made an end, as it made an end of so much else, of bows and arrows and the gay science and chivalry.

In hawking only one glove was worn, on the right hand, for the falcon to rest upon, leaving the left free. This glove was strong and thick, as it needed to be, to save the hand from the falcon's talons, for,

which demanded a great amount of attention and care, was indeed an essential part in the education of a gentleman ; and the present of a well-trained hawk was one to be welcomed even by the king. Some of the prettiest scenes in the illuminated pictures of the time are precisely of this kind of sport and amusement, as anyone may see by turning even to such books as Shaw's "Dress and Customs of the Middle-Ages" and Lacroix's "Costumes and Manners of the Middle-Ages."

To hunt the heron was considered lordly sport. Here a dog was required to flush the game ; three falcons—one to make the quarry rise, the second to follow it, and the third to clutch it. In field and river sport the falcon was not let fly direct from the



A HAWKING PROCESSION.

though tame, an awkward lurch might make the bird pierce

the flesh with his sharp claws. And very tame some of them were—so tame that in many cases they were kept constantly beside master or mistress, a little rod or *perche* being put up in the chamber, on which the hawk could rest when he had become too much of a burden for the hand. They were often indeed great pets and sources of amusement. The training of the hawk,

wrist, but was thrown up into the air and let fly before the game

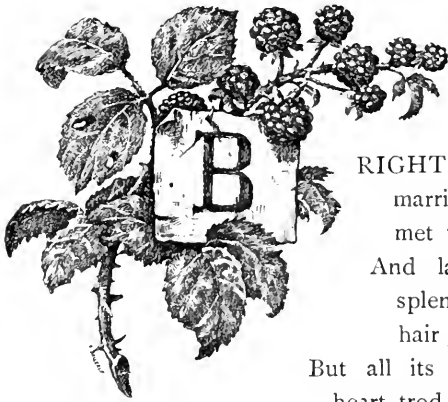
was flushed : it hovered in the air for a time, and then at the right moment swooped downward on the prey which the dogs had put up. The dogs used in hawking were spaniels, and the most favourite form of hawking for the ladies was by the streamside. In this case they had for quarry the water-birds—ducks and even smaller birds—for they were not then very particular about a quarry. Nay, it is said

that when other game was not in season they would go for small birds—sparrows or blackbirds, or anything indeed that came in their way, just to keep their hands in, as we may say, and the falcons in good condition, of course.

To show how even the monks, abbots and bishops were keen for hawking, many stories might be told—some of them perhaps apocryphal, but the following is authentic: it is a fact that they carried their hawks about with them, and in the reign of Edward III. the Bishop of Ely attended service at the Church of Bermondsey, Southwark, leaving his hawk in the cloister, which in the meantime was stolen—the Bishop solemnly ex-

communicating the thieves; and we read that never after did this sporting bishop leave his hawk exposed so far, but took it in with him and deposited it upon the steps of the altar, and even during mass. By the 34th of Edward III. it was made felony to steal a hawk, and to take its eggs, even in a person's own grounds, was punishable with imprisonment for a year and a day besides a fine at the king's pleasure. In Elizabeth's reign the imprisonment was reduced to three months, but the offender was to find security for his good behaviour for seven years, or lie in prison till he did.

So devoted were our early fellow-countrymen to the amusement of hawking.



## A LETTER.

RIGHT rose thy  
marriage day, and  
met thee brightly,  
And laid a bridal  
splendour on thine  
hair;

But all its hours on my  
heart trod lightly,

Lightly, my child, yet leaving footprints there,  
And dropping pansies while they turn'd to air.

Midsummer day with thee at noontide now,  
Blurs with its blinding sunshine old content;  
Familiar blessings bless thee still, but thou  
Art scarce aware of them for dazzlement,  
And all thy good with thy new Best is blent.

Thou to the wards of wedlock didst endeavour  
Firmly to fit the silver key, thy voice,  
Then softly turn'd it on thyself for ever,  
With such fine faith as left my love no choice  
But in thy joy, my darling, to rejoice.

And thy brave oath of fealty did not falter,

But came more clearly at the dread "obey,"  
And promised wifely service at the altar,  
Like the last word thy girlhood had to say—  
It was thy will to give thy will away.

Then, later, when thy marriage robe, like moon-  
shine,

Gleam'd lucid in the twilight of the room;  
Sunblinds just stirr'd, and flecks of afternoon-  
shine,

Stirr'd on the pyramids of hot-house bloom,  
And talk ran gaily in the pleasant gloom;

Thou wert so silent! growing fainter hearted,  
With grave gaze fasten'd on the gilded toy,  
Where slipp'd the hour.

Sweet whisper when we parted!  
Sweet lids that droop'd to hide both tears  
and joy

"Be sure, be sure, love cannot love destroy."

MARY BROTHERTON.

# THE APPIN MURDER.

NOTES ON THE HISTORICAL GROUNDWORK OF "KIDNAPPED" AND "CATRIONA."

BY D. L. CAMERON.

"Mony ane talks o' the grass, the grass,  
And mony ane o' the corn,  
And mony ane talks o' gude Robin Hood,  
Kens little where he was born."

MANY people who have read "Kidnapped" and its sequel, "David Balfour," or, to adopt its new title, "Catriona," in the last volume of "Atalanta," have the vaguest ideas of the historical foundation of the story. In spite of the preface there are some who suppose that Mr. Stevenson invented the Appin murder even as the eminent scientist imagined that Mr. Matthew Arnold had invented Bishop Wilson. The "Saturday Review" itself accuses Mr. Stevenson of "flouting poetical justice himself most vilely in the matter of poor James of the Glens," in order to sustain the interest of the story, and to give it an unexpected ending. Yet the ending, a flouting not only of poetical, but of practical justice, is taken literally from the law reports (and because the man came to be hanged) it's in a manner history.

These notes may be of some interest to those who have been following the "Adventures of David Balfour" in this magazine. "Kidnapped" and its sequel are magnificent examples of historical novels, almost literally faithful to history, and yet so lighted up by the genius of the author that there is nothing slavish in their exactness. There is an epical completeness about the central fact upon which the books are founded. The Appin Murder was buried in old law books, or at the best lived in the traditions of the Appin district, but now Mr. Stevenson has made the world ring a second time with its fame. The authorities for the facts are neither many nor exceedingly difficult to get, and it would repay the students of the "Atalanta" School of Fiction to compare the plain tale told at inordinate length in the report of the Trial and elsewhere, with the artistic setting that Mr. Stevenson has given to the narrative. For those who do not care to take this trouble this paper has been compiled.

Alan Breck Stewart (Breck means pock-marked) had been left by his father to the care of his kinsman, James of the Glens. Alan was extravagant, spent more than his patrimony, and enlisted in either Murrav's or Lascelles' High-

landers. He was taken prisoner at Prestonpans, and became a deserter by joining the rebel army. When the revolt was crushed, he escaped to France, and took service with the French king, though during the next few years he came over two or three times to revisit his friends, and (perhaps) to beat up recruits for King Lewie.

Scott speaks of him in the introduction to Rob Roy:—"Alan Breck lived till the beginning of the French Revolution. About 1789 a friend of mine, then residing at Paris, was invited to see some procession . . . from the windows of an apartment occupied by a Scottish benedictine priest. He found sitting by the fire, a tall, thin, raw-boned, grim-looking old man, with the *petit croix* of St. Louis. His visage was strongly marked by the irregular projections of the cheek bones and chin. His eyes were grey. His grizzled hair exhibited marks of having been red, and his complexion was weather-beaten, and remarkably freckled. Some civilities in French passed between the old man and my friend, in the course of which they talked of the streets and squares of Paris, till at length the old soldier . . . said with a sigh, in a sharp Highland accent, 'Deil ane o' them a' is worth the Hie Street of Edinburgh!' On enquiry, this admirer of Auld Reekie, which he was never to see again, proved to be Alan Breck Stewart."

It is to be noted that Alan was a big man: James a little one. The silver buttons, too (for the report of the trial is most minute), were on a coat belonging not to Alan but to James. It was, however, not an uncommon thing for Scots, who, like Alan, were wanderers on the face of the earth, to wear silver buttons and even gold chains, so that if they died far from home the means were at hand to provide a decent burial.

The events that led up to the Appin murder were these. Colin Campbell of Glenure, an old soldier, had been appointed king's factor on the forfeited estates of Cameron of Lochiel, and Stewart of Ardshiel, both exiles in France. At first Campbell employed James of the Glens

(Ardshiel's natural brother) as a kind of sub-factor. James gathered the legal rents, remitted them to Glenure, and at the same time obtained from the tenants certain sums in addition, which sums he sent elsewhere. As Alan says in "Kidnapped," "the people were wringing their very plaids to get a second rent and send it over seas" to their chief. On the Lochiel estate, the tenants were paying their chief his rents, and at the same fulfilled the demands of the king's factor. It is said that James collected this secondary rent from the Ardshiel tenants with the tacit consent of Glenure, till the Government, to break the influence of the chiefs, issued orders to all the king's factors, that they were on no account to let any of the farms to any of the relatives of the forfeiting persons. As regarded himself James did not care for this, for he easily got another farm near at hand whence he could still watch over Ardshiel's interest. But when Glenure took proceedings to evict several other tenants whose places would be filled by strangers, James went to Edinburgh at his own expense, and presented a bill of suspension, which was refused. He then sent to a notary to ask him to enter a protest on the day of eviction and thus delay the removal. The first to whom he applied refused, fearing to disoblige Glenure. It is at least unlikely that Stewart should have taken the trouble to send for a notary had he meant to shoot Glenure the day before the eviction.

On the term day, May 15th, the tenants were to be removed. On the 14th, Campbell, accompanied by his nephew, a sheriff-officer, and a servant, was on his way from Fort William to Kentallin. As he was passing through the wood of Lettermore, some one in the wood shot him through the back. Two balls passed clean through his body, and very shortly afterwards he died in the arms of his nephew. Not only was he not accompanied by soldiers, but he and those who were with him were unarmed. The Lord Advocate was so successful in suppressing all mention of Mr. Balfour, of Shaws, that it is not even mentioned in the trial that that young laird was looking on.

At the time of the murder, Alan was on a visit from France. On the Monday before it took place he had gone to Aucharn (James's new farm), and there he had changed his French clothes for others belonging to James. Next day he went visiting

other friends in the neighbourhood. On Thursday (the day of the murder) he went fishing up a burn whence he could overlook the road from Fort William, along which Glenure had to come. He was in the wood of Lettermore until five or six in the evening, and afterwards he appeared no more openly in the country. The evidence against him briefly was: that he had said he had rather the "meikle deil had the estate than Glenure;" that he asked the ferryman early in the day whether Glenure had passed; that he was near the spot where the murder was done, and that a man, similarly dressed, had been seen running away from the place.

Alan's wanderings for the first part of the way were fully told at the trial. He had roused the family at Carnock at three o'clock in the morning; and thence he went to Koalinsnacoan, even now a lonely and desolate place far from any road. Naturally, there is nothing about the grilling on the top of the rock in Glencoe. Was it for the sake of this scene that Mr. Stevenson changed the date from May to July? The trial tells that at Koalinsnacoan, Alan wrote the letter with the wood pigeon's quill and the gunpowder ink. The bouman (by his own story) refused to take the letter, as he had heard that all strangers going into Fort William—for it was to a merchant there, and not to James, that the letter was addressed—were searched. Alan told him in that case to eat the letter, but the bouman declined. On Sunday there arrived at Koalinsnacoan a travelling packman, bringing the French clothes and five guineas from James, who had heard where Alan was hiding.

Alan left the borrowed clothes at the foot of a tree, and started off across the hills. He had from the bouman a noggin of whey, but (so far as the trial shows) no provisions for crossing a district the dreariest and most desolate in Scotland. Early in the week, after the murder, he arrived at the house of an uncle of his in Rannoch. He was there charged with the murder, but stoutly denied being guilty. About a week later he was seen only fourteen miles further on—how Mr. Stevenson accounts for this slow progress may be seen from the novel; but really no one knows how he spent the time, and after this he was heard no more of in Scotland.

James, as the head man in the district, fell under immediate suspicion, and no time was lost

in arresting him—indeed, the warrant was made out after he was safely under lock and key. He was taken to Fort William and kept there in the strictest confinement. Of his relatives, his wife and her sister only were allowed to see him, and they but once or twice. Even his agent was denied access to him, and important witnesses (including his son) were cast into prison, and some were kept in irons. Some of these witnesses were plied with drink, and even bribed. On the other hand, Glenure's friends, without warrant, but backed by soldiers, thrice searched Aucharn, in the hope of finding evidence.

As the time set for the trial drew on, James was removed to Inveraray, the chief town of the Campbells. How the printed libel or indictment was refused to his agent, and how the agent met him at Tyndrum, on the road to Inveraray, are all set forth in the novel.

The court began to sit at six o'clock on the morning of September the 22nd, and did not rise again till between seven and eight o'clock on the morning of Sunday the 24th. No wonder that a juror interrupted one of the prisoner's advocates with "Pray, sir, cut it short, we have had enough of it, and are quite tired; the trial having lasted long." On Sunday morning the judges adjourned the assize till Monday, at eleven. The jurors, although they had been sitting in court about fifty hours without sleep, and although they were allowed about twenty-seven hours to prepare their verdict, merely refreshed themselves with wine, and had decided on their verdict early on Sunday forenoon. It is said that three disagreed from the rest, but as their dissent could avail nothing (in Scotland a majority verdict is enough) they consented to a unanimous verdict.

On receiving the sentence, Stewart said, "My lords, I tamely submit to my hard sentence. I forgive the jury and the witnesses who have sworn several things falsely against me: and I declare before the great God and this auditory, that I had no previous knowledge of the murder of Colin Campbell of Glenure, and am as innocent of it as a child unborn. I am not afraid to die, but what grieves me is my character, that after ages should think me guilty of such a horrid and barbarous murder."

On receiving the last sacrament, he again repeated this declaration of innocence in even

stronger terms. Those who know the reverent character of the older race of Highlanders, will know what weight is due to such a solemn denial.

An interval of about six weeks took place between the sentence and the execution; and Stewart was carried back to the Appin country so that a great impression might be made on the people.

So on a "conspicuous eminence" upon the south side of Ballachullish ferry, in full view both of Appin and Mamore, and within a short distance of the wood of Lettermore, James was hanged on the 8th of November. On the scaffold he made a long dying speech absolutely denying all the charges that had been brought against him, and detailing the hardships he and his witnesses had suffered in prison. He expressed great astonishment that one charge should have been brought against him in a Christian country. As he says, "I was a common parent to all fatherless children, and took care of widows in the country, which gained me great influence over the people, by which they were much led by me; or some words to that purpose. I hope soon to appear before a Judge who will reward charity and benevolence in another way, and I only regret how little service was in my power to do, not only to the fatherless and widows, but to all mankind in general; as I thank God I would make all the race of Adam happy if I could."

After making this speech he repeated the thirty-fifth psalm in the Scottish metrical version:—

"Plead, Lord, with those that plead; and fight  
With those that fight with me;  
Of shield and buckle take thou hold,  
Stand up my help to be."

All the time of the execution the storm was so great that it was with difficulty the people stood on the hill. The body was afterwards hung in chains, and a company of sixteen soldiers were stationed at Ballachullish to prevent the country-people from cutting down the gibbet.

The place where the gallows stood is still pointed out. In fact it is said that the grass never grows, and the snow never lies on the spot where the innocent blood was shed.

Lord Cockburn mentions a defence that a true Campbell made for the conduct of the Duke: "Onybody can get a man hangit that's guilty; but it's only Lummore (Macallum More) can hang a man wha's no guilty ava."

Alan was undoubtedly thought guilty at the time, but tradition acquits him of the blame, and he wrote home long afterwards, saying that the murderer was still walking about in the strath of Appin.

Mr. Stevenson says that you will not get the real culprit's name out of the Highlanders, but this much may be said, that his family are said to be under a curse to this day, and it is popularly supposed that none of his descendants has ever "laid his hand on a whole skin." Neither history nor tradition, however, in spite of Mr. Stevenson and Mr. Lang, has charged the murder against the Camerons of Mamore. The deposition made by James More Macgregor, was given when he was lying in prison awaiting sentence for the capital crimes of hamesucken, forcible abduction, forcible marriage, and the like. He had helped his brother Robert (the Robin Oig of "Kidnapped") to carry off an heiress, aged twenty and but six weeks a widow, a crime for which Robert was hanged. After the declaration had been made, the authorities, hearing that an escape had been planned, removed James More from the city prison to the castle. Soon after the removal, the escape was made as related in the novel, only in addition to the daughter who assisted in it, there were in the cell two other of Drummond's children.

It is shown in some letters of James that he did try to kidnap Alan, but failed badly. Alan hearing of his design, threatened to kill him, and did (so runs the letter), steal "out of my cloak-bag, several things of cloathes, linnens, and four snuff-boxes, one of which was S. Drummond's; all this scene was acted in presence of your shoemaker's wife and daughter." After this failure Drummond got a passport and went to London to lay his case before the ministry. He was apparently asked to become a spy, and promised good pay, but he refused, and this refusal is one of the most creditable things he ever did. After his return to France, he fell into great poverty, and died within a short time.

The Lord Advocate, two years after the

trial, became a judge with the title of Lord Prestongrange. He had (according to Omond's "Lord Advocates of Scotland") three daughters. None of them is named Barbara, but the eldest, Janet, who became Countess of Hyndford, may be that very fine, great lady, that "is Miss Barbara's name-mamma."

The pronunciation of the name Catriona has raised a good deal of discussion in the "Athenæum" and elsewhere. The difficulty of writing Gaelic names phonetically is great, partly because the English alphabet gives so faint an idea of the Gaelic sounds, and also because the pronunciation differs in the various districts of the Highlands. Perhaps Katreena is as near as possible to the name as it is spoken to-day in Appin.

The tale of Uistean Mor Mac Ghille Phadraig, not as Andie told it in the Bass Rock, but literally translated from the Gaelic, may be found in Campbell's "Tales of the West Highlands." Vol. 2 p. 97. Edinburgh, 1860.\*

The dry bones that Mr. Stevenson has made to live may be found scattered in:—

1. "The trial of James Stewart in Aucharn, in Duror of Appin, for the murder of Colin Campbell of Glenure, Esq., factor for His Majesty on the forfeited estate, of Ardshiel. . . Edinburgh, 1752."

This is a stout volume of 438 pages, and in it may be found all the examinations, evidence, advocates' speeches, judges' speeches, at full, not to say wearisome length. This trial has often been reprinted in various collections.

2. "A supplement to the trial of James Stewart, containing papers omitted by the publishers of the trial, observations on the trial with anecdotes relating thereto, James Stewart's dying speech, and a few particulars respecting his behaviour, by a bystander . . . London, 1753. Printed for the benefit of a widow and her five children . . . This pamphlet consists of eighty-six pages, and it gives some curious details that were suppressed in the Edinburgh trial. It is said, however, to have been itself suppressed.

\* These tales have recently been republished by Alex. Gardner, Publisher to Her Majesty: Paisley.

# My True Love hath my Heart.

Words by Sir P. SIDNEY (1554-1586).

Music by W. AUGUSTUS BARRATT.

VOICE. *mp*

*Andante, con espressione.*

My true love hath my heart, and I have his,

PIANO. *mf* *p*

*dolce.*

By just ex-change one to the o - ther given : I hold his dear,

*p* *cres.* *pp*

*cres.* *rall.*

and mine he can - not miss— There nev - er was a bet - ter bar - gain driven ;

*cres.* *rall.*

*pp* *rall.*

My true love hath my heart, and I have his.....

*pp dolce.* *rall.*

*p*

His heart in me keeps him and me in one; My heart in him his

*p dolce.*

thoughts and sen-ses guide : He loves my heart, for once it was his own ;

*rall.*

*pp*

I che-rish his be-cause in me it bides : My true love hath my heart,

and I have his.....

*pp*

*pp*

*rall. pp*



# WHITE TURRETS.

AN OUTLINE.

BY MRS. MOLESWORTH,

*Author of "Carrots"; "The Palace in the Garden"; "A Charge Fulfilled";  
"The Red Grange"; "Studies and Stories," etc., etc.*

## CHAPTER IX.—*Continued.*

"You feel that?" said the girl, eagerly. "I am so glad. Yes, there is a very peculiar charm about it. I think it must be that it is so little changed from what it must have been hundreds of years ago. It is so easy in one's fancy to re-people it with those who used to live in it and love it as we do now. Celia makes up all sorts of stories, based on the real history and legends of the place. Sometimes," with a little laugh, "she really frightens herself, for we *have* a ghost. We call her the——"

"Louise," said Winifred, "I just won't have you tell Miss Norreys that idiotic old story. I wish all ghost stories and nonsense of the kind were forbidden by Act of Parliament."

"We should be in some ways the losers if it were so," said Hertha, quietly.

She could not understand Winifred, for there was evident earnest under-~~under~~ her half-laughing tone.

"What a strange inconsistent girl she is," thought the elder woman. "She looks and seems honesty itself, it is *the* thing that attracted me to her, and yet *how* she has deceived, or at least misled me, and through me, Mr. Montague and others. I feel hot when I think of it! Still she does not feel ashamed, and she must have known I should be undeceived as soon as I came here. And now this about ghosts? Is it possible she is really afraid of that sort of thing, and that it makes her dislike her home? She certainly does not look as if she had ever had a fright?"

Her silence during these cogitations had re-acted on her companions, and for a few minutes neither spoke. Then Winifred turned abruptly to Louise.

"Who is with you?" she said, "or who is coming? Lennox of course, and any friends of his?"

"Yes," Louise replied with the slightest possible increase of colour in her face. "Lennox and Captain Hillyer. We shall be quite a cheerful Easter party if only papa gets better quickly"

"Dear me," thought Miss Norreys, who was not above all feminine weaknesses, "I do feel

very angry with you, Winifred Maryon. I shall be all wrong about my clothes even: I shall have to telegraph for evening dresses."

They were entering the drive by now. It was in keeping with all the rest. Long and straight, with thickly growing trees at each side, which gave an additional touch of mystery to the approach to the house. And though straight—so that the building standing somewhat high on its terraced summit was conspicuous, the white flights of steps gleaming like the walls themselves in the sunshine—the road dipped considerably, though gradually, here and there, causing all but the turrets, from which the house evidently took its name, momentarily to disappear.

Hertha, for the time, forgot all else in her true sense of pleasure and interest. And no words she could have chosen, had she been the most calculating of mortals, would have made such a pleasing impression in the still dubious Mrs. Maryon as those with which her new guest replied to her words of cordial but slightly constrained greeting.

"I have never been so enchanted by anything as by the first sight of your exquisite old house. I feel for once in real fairy-land."

And graceful Celia, in her pale grey dress, with a flush on her cheeks and shy welcome in her lovely eyes, might, indeed, have been the Sleeping Beauty just awakened.

That "first impression" grew instead of fading, for it was well rooted. Both Mrs. Maryon and her guest, so different in all else, so entirely unlike each other in the circumstances of their lives—the one so sheltered and protected, so curiously ignorant of life save in her own experience of it; the other, so early thrown upon herself, clung to by others at an age when most are still clinging and dependent; yet neither of the two either narrowed or hardened: these two, thanks to their genuine womanliness and unselfish single-mindedness, made friends, and such a friendship lasts.

By some tacit agreement the "talk," which on Mrs. Maryon's part had been one underlying

motive of the invitation, was during the first few days evaded. They did talk, but not so much about Winifred as of themselves, their personal feelings, and almost at once Mrs. Maryon knew that she had utterly misjudged this girl, or woman as Hertha preferred to call herself. Though it had arisen through no fault of her own, Winifred's mother was acutely conscious of the prejudice she had harboured against Miss Norreys, and it now seemed to her as if she could not do enough to make amends for the mistaken opinion, she was yet far too delicate-minded to avow its object, and Hertha, on her side, bided her time for the explanation which she knew was unavoidable. She was feeling her way, anxious not to blame Winifred unduly, difficult as she found it to understand the girl, or to sympathise with the line she had taken up.

But the long *têtes-à-têtes* with her friend which Miss Maryon had looked forward to did not come to pass. Instead, Hertha seemed never tired of talking to her hostess, relating to her as they grew to know each other better, tender recollections of her own mother and bygone days which she seldom now allowed herself to dwell upon.

And Winifred, one of whose good qualities was a remarkable absence of jealousy, consoled herself by reflecting that Hertha was probably actuated by real regard for herself.

"She sees that it will make everything easier for Mamma to like and trust her, and thus to get rid of all these old prejudices against women with a career," she thought.

Altogether the days passed pleasantly. Hertha allowed herself for the time to live in the present. Her interest in both Celia and Louise deepened; of Celia's unusual talent she became convinced, and she determined to do anything in her power to help the young girl to cultivate it. Mr. Maryon recovered sufficiently to join the family party in the later hours of the day, when his cheerfulness made one almost forget his chronic invalidism.

"I like your cousin Lennox so much," said Hertha one day to Celia. "I had no idea from the little I had heard of him that he was so—well, interesting, as well as sterling."

"I am so glad you like him," said Celia, her face lighting up. "Yes, he is *very* nice, though not, perhaps, exactly clever."

"He is not stupid," said Hertha.

"Oh, no; not stupid. He's just the sort of man that would have got on splendidly if he had had a clever wife. It is such a pity," and she sighed a little. "I daresay you have noticed—he is so devoted to Winifred, and she doesn't care for him in the least."

"To *Winifred*," said Miss Norreys. "No, I certainly should not have thought so. Are you sure?" "It is not one of Winifred's freaks to think so," she was going to have added, but she stopped in time.

"Oh, *quite* sure," said Celia, with the slightest possible inflection of annoyance. "Winifred is not at all the sort of girl to flirt, or anything like that. And I think it is only natural that he should be devoted to her. She is so clever, and so—unlike the common run, and Lennox has looked up to her all his life. We should all have been so glad, for then she could have settled down at home, or close to home, for good. Len's little place is only two miles away. And it would have kept White Turrets in the family. He is our second cousin, you know."

"These arrangements seldom come to pass, however," said Miss Norreys, philosophically. "Had that anything to do with Winifred's dislike to staying at home, do you think?"

"Oh dear, no," said Celia. "She did not think it a matter of much importance. She has always wanted to take a line of her own; she has always felt herself cramped by ordinary life. And she wants to be of real use."

The two were walking up and down the terrace. For a moment or two Hertha did not speak. Then she said quietly:

"Perhaps I should not discuss the matter with you, dear Celia. You are so much younger than I. But, before I go, I want to have a long talk with your mother. I must tell you that I was completely mistaken about you all. I had no idea whatever that Winifred had such a home, such plain home duties and responsibilities as I strongly suspect she has. I—I thought you were very poor, and that she had to earn money to help you all."

Celia grew crimson, and almost gasped for breath.

"Miss Norreys!" she exclaimed. Then she added eagerly, "Winifred did not mean to mislead you—she is not like that."

"N—no," said Hertha. "I was very indignant at first, but now I don't think she meant anything, except at all costs to get her own way. Of course there was no calculated deceit about it, otherwise she would have found some means of preventing my coming here. But she has placed me myself in a very disagreeable position, as I must make her see. And she must face the consequences. But I should like to know—you have plenty of sense—do *you* think she is doing right?"

Celia was sorely pressed. Her loyalty to Winifred rose up in arms. But she was taken at a disadvantage: she had always believed that Miss Norreys had warmly aided and abetted Winifred in her search for a career.

"I—I am so surprised," she said at last. "I suppose it is best for me to tell you the truth. Yes, at the bottom of my heart I now think—I did not always, but I do now—that she could find plenty to do, and plenty of use to be of to others, here, at home. Especially as, you know all that, I suppose? You know that all the property, and it is large, will be *hers*. She is in the position of an eldest son."

More and more astonished, Miss Norreys felt at a loss for words.

"No, I had no idea of that," she said. "That puts her duty beyond all question. I cannot understand her. I feel almost inclined to say I have no patience with her."

That was to be a day—an evening rather—of explanations. The young people were amusing themselves in the billiard-room after dinner, and Miss Norreys, feeling a little tired, and having no special liking for billiards, was sitting quietly in the drawing-room, thinking over the family complications in which she found herself so unexpectedly involved, when the sound of someone entering the room made her look up.

Somewhat to her astonishment she saw that the new comer was Lennox Maryon. Still more surprised did she feel when he came forward and drew a chair close to her own.

"Am I intruding?" he said, "you look nearly as startled as if I were the famous White Weeper herself." His tone was bantering, but underneath Hertha perceived a touch of nervousness.

"I fancied you were absorbed in your game," she said. "No, I did not fancy you were the White Weeper, though I confess I have been think-

ing about her. But she never comes inside the house."

"She has never done so up to now," said Lennox, "but heaven knows what desperate steps she may not be driven to take if things go on as they are doing at present."

His tone was so peculiar that Miss Norreys glanced at him questioningly.

"I hope devoutly she will wait till I have gone, then," she said, half laughingly. "I have no wish at all to make her acquaintance. Are you joking, Mr. Maryon, or are you at all, just a little, in earnest?"

"Yes and no," he replied. "I am half joking out of the excess of my earnestness. Miss Norreys, I have something to tell you—a confession to make. Do you know, sometimes I have fancied you guessed, that I am very seriously very thoroughly, in love, for the first time in my life?"

"With?" asked Hertha.

"My cousin Louise," he said, quietly, though his sunburnt face deepened a little in colour.

Hertha nodded her head.

"Yes," she said, "I thought so. And—what about Winifred, Mr. Maryon?"

"I know the difference now," he replied. "That was a case of thinking I was what everyone wished me to be. Now—oh good heavens!—*what* a difference!"

"You should be very grateful to Winifred," said Hertha, drily.

"I am," he said, naively, "*most* grateful. But"—and here his honest eyes grew troubled—"it is far from plain sailing. As things are, Louise won't hear of it, and she is a girl of her word. It all depends upon Winifred. Miss Norreys, she is infatuated."

A full explanation followed. Lennox was clear-headed and entirely candid, and before the conversation was at an end, Hertha saw and understood things more thoroughly than even after her talk with Mrs. Maryon.

"I will do what I can," she said, "but I feel less confident than I did, somehow. I almost think I could brave a visit from the ghostly guardian of the family, if I thought her influence would carry the day."

"Hush, my dear Miss Norreys," said Lennox. "I admire your devotion, but I tremble. *Supposing* she—it—took you at your word."

And again Hertha felt uncertain if he were joking or in earnest.

But before she could say more, Celia appeared in the doorway.

"You lazy people," she said, "everybody's asking for you. We are going to have a dance in the hall before we go to bed."

## CHAPTER X.

### DREAMS AND NO DREAMS.

MISS NORREYS' mind, though a remarkably well-balanced one, was yet far from phlegmatic or unimpressible. So far indeed from such did she know her inner self to be, that she had learnt by experience to beware of her own natural impulsiveness, to have profound belief in "second thoughts."

But she was full of quick sympathy, and ever ready to feel keen interest in her surroundings. It is scarcely to be wondered at, therefore, that on the night following the day we have been describing, she went up to her own room greatly engrossed by all she had heard, anxiously eager to prove herself a friend worthy of the name to the various members of the Maryon family who had appealed to her for assistance or advice.

It was a beautiful night. Before Hertha got into bed she drew back the curtains of one of the two windows—her room was a corner one—as was her custom. For she loved the early morning light, and it never disturbed her slumbers before her usual hour for waking.

A flood of moonlight lay on the terrace beneath. The night was perfectly, peculiarly still, not a leaf seeming to flutter. There was something curiously dream-like about the whole scene—for the room in which Hertha stood, and on which she threw a glance as she turned again, was, like most of those in the old house, quaint and picturesque in its very simplicity. White-pannelled and wainscotted, with little wreaths of carved flowers above the lintel of the door, and over the two old mirrors sunk in the walls: the bed in a sort of alcove; the ancient fireplace, surmounted by a very high and narrow carved and moulded mantle-piece, of the same dull, "*mat*," white-painted wood, which was the chief characteristic of the house, the whole effect was like nothing

that Miss Norreys remembered ever to have seen before.

"It is very un-English, very un-nineteenth-century, very unlike all the attempted reproductions of the past we have so many of," thought Hertha. "It is so exactly what it may have been, and probably was, three or four hundred years ago. One can realise how the family life has gone on unbrokenly with all the changing actors in it, generation after generation."

And again she glanced out. For the first time it struck her that this window overlooked the lower terrace walk, which Celia preferred to avoid. With a sudden increase of interest, Hertha pushed up the sash, and leaned out. Yes, that was the very place, the walk bare and open at the end near the house, growing dim and shady as it was lost to view in the shrubberies further on.

"If it were worth the trouble," thought Hertha, "I should like to put on a cloak and go right along to the end and back. I don't think I should be afraid; the moonlight is so bright and everything is so still. No flopping branches or sighing wind to make one fanciful. Yes, I *think* I should venture. And how proud I should be to tell them of it in the morning."

But even as she gazed, a slight misgiving seized her. *Was* the night so perfectly still, or was the wind suddenly getting up? Something *was* moving at the far end of the walk—the "White Weeper's" walk. What? The branch of a tree probably, there were aspens down there, Hertha remembered, and a mere nothing would set *them* quivering.

A slight shiver ran through her—it was growing chilly. With a half contemptuous smile at herself, she drew down the window, and in a very few moments was safely ensconced in bed, though somewhat shivery still.

"I hope I haven't caught cold through my own folly," was her last waking thought.

For notwithstanding her preoccupied mind and a certain amount of excitement, of which she was conscious, Hertha fell asleep quickly, and anyone seeing her would have said that her slumbers were sound and untroubled.

But in point of fact she was dreaming vividly—all the events of the last few days seemed to be re-enacted before her, with the addition of various fantastic accompaniments such as dreamers know

well. Friends and acquaintances she had not thought of for years, suddenly appeared as familiar guests among the members of the family at White Turrets; her own grandmother, whom as a child Hertha had been very fond of, seemed to be there as an ancient *Châtelaine* of the place, pointing out to her, among the visitors, historical personages whom no living being could have known outside a book.

"We are expecting the King—Louis XVI.—of course, and Queen Marie Antoinette, this evening. They have long wished to visit White Turrets, and now——" her grandmother was explaining to her, when, with a sudden start, Hertha awoke.

She was not sorry, for though the dream had been of curiously fascinating and fantastic interest, she had been conscious—and the consciousness remained with her even after she was awake—of a strange indescribable fear, that dream fear which I fancy at some time or other everyone must have experienced: a fear as of fate, all-pervading and irresistible, of perfectly unspeakable *strangeness*, as if we had got on to another plane of existence altogether, where nothing was as we had ever known it, where we feel ourselves alone in an isolation such as real life has never, even faintly, figured to us. Through all the familiar scenery of her dream, through the sound of her grandmother's voice, and the perfect knowledge that she was here, at White Turrets, among the friends she seemed now to know so well, through the laughter and the smiles she knew to be around her, was this terrible ghastly consciousness of *fear*.

And it did not at once disappear when she awoke. It seemed still to be clinging to her, haunting the air round about her. Never had Hertha suffered in the same way to such an extent.

"What can be the matter with me?" she said to herself. "I feel poisoned with fear. Dear me, if this sort of thing is the kind of sensation one has in a haunted room, Heaven preserve me from such an experience! But *can* there be anything uncanny in this room? I have never felt it before. Oh no, it must all be fancy and nonsense. My nerves are upset, I suppose. I have been taking my friends' troubles and anxieties too much to heart."

But she could not get to sleep again. Indeed,

she felt almost afraid of doing so for fear of a repetition of her dream terrors. They grew fainter after a while, but she beamed increasingly wakeful. And at last she got out of bed, and throwing her dressing gown round her, she went towards the window, of which the blind was drawn up.

It was the same window where she had sat looking out on the moonlight late the night before. Why did she go back there? Afterwards she could not tell. It seemed as if some invisible power had drawn her thither, and for the moment she had forgotten the slight shiver she had felt at believing she saw something moving in the shrubbery. But no sooner was she seated again at her old post than the remembrance returned to her. She would have liked to move away, but a sort of fascination, partly curiosity, partly a feeling she could not describe, retained her.

The moonlight was much less brilliant now. There seemed a slight haze, scarcely amounting to clouds over the sky. But the night—for dawn was still some way off—was very calm, and there was no wind at all.

"There is literally *nothing* moving," thought Hertha. "The stillness almost frightens me. How quite absurdly fanciful I am becoming," and, as if in a kind of anticipation of something, she knew not what, she held her breath in an intensity of listening. Then came over her the feeling of being no longer under her own control. She could not have moved had she wished to do so. But she did not wish it. With this new sensation her fears had all disappeared.

It came—the something she was watching for. Far off, at the extreme end of the walk already described, a faint flutter, between light and shadow — a *movement* — grew perceptible. A presence of some kind was there. It came on and on, slowly but steadily, and the moon came out again more clearly, its rays reflected on the vaguely-defined figure, of which the most Hertha could for some moments have said was that it moved and that it was white.

She sat as if turned to stone, yet she was no longer afraid. Not even when, by degrees, she became aware that the form was undoubtedly that of a woman—a woman, young, graceful, but in dire distress, for as it advanced, with its slow, cadenced step, till within a few yards of the terrace

just below her, she saw it lift its pallid arms in their shadowy white drapery, as if in piteous appeal, then wringing its hands, for one fleeting moment its face was raised to her as if her presence was known and realised, and she saw that it was that of a beautiful woman, weeping, weeping, sorely, as if her very heart would break for woe she was powerless to avert.

And a whisper ran through Hertha's overwrought brain: "It is she—the White Weeper—she is appealing to *me*."

But there was no sound, only the intense gaze of the exquisite though death-like and mournful face—and while she felt those eyes upon her, Hertha could have felt nothing beside.

Then they withdrew. Something made her at last able to close her own, and she half fell back on her chair. And when she looked again there was nothing—nothing whatever but the trees and the garden in the moonlight, utterly still, as if in an enchanted sleep.

And Hertha went back to bed, and fell almost at once into sound and perfectly dreamless slumber.

She woke at her usual hour, to sunshine and the sound of the birds' joyous carolling, this time. She lay still, thinking deeply, as she went over in her mind the strange experiences of the night. The question—"Was it all a dream?"—never for one moment occurred to her. Neither then nor at any future time did any doubt of the objective reality of what she had seen shake the intensity of the impression that had been made upon her.

Yet the *fear* was all gone—in fact, ever since she had thrown off the nightmare-like oppression of her fantastic dream, it had been no longer there. She felt no reluctance to stay on at White Turrets, no repulsion to the room, no shrinking even from the long terrace walk, up and down which had paced those ghostly steps—the pitiful, shadowy form of the White Weeper. But still there was much for Hertha to consider. Why had the weird guardian of the family appeared to *her*?

"She may be there every night—always, for what I know," thought Miss Norreys, "but why were *my* eyes opened to perceive her? Why did she appeal to *me*, as I feel convinced she did? Why not to self-willed Winifred, the cause of all the trouble and anxiety? Possibly she could not: perhaps Winifred is so constituted that no spirit

could make its presence known to her. It must be that, I suppose. But what can I do? Winifred must know by this time that I do not sympathise with her mania for "a career," and that she has involved me in her folly in a far from pleasant way. However, I suppose I must speak to her more plainly and strongly than I have done—that is the only response I can make to you, poor troubled spirit!"

And before she began to dress she stood for a moment at the window, gazing along the path now gleaming and brilliant in the clear morning sunshine, and, while she did so, a sudden idea struck her. She would tell, in the first place at least, *no one* except Winifred of what she had seen.

"It shall be a confidence between her and me," she decided, "and as such it may impress her the more—far more than if I told them all, and she heard everyone cross-questioning me about it," and no sooner had she thus resolved than she was conscious of a curious sensation of satisfaction, as if for the first time she had fully grasped the nature of the commission entrusted to her to perform.

She did not look quite like herself that morning when she went downstairs. Her beautiful eyes were less clear and open; she seemed tired and slightly preoccupied, though she did her best to hide any signs of disturbance.

But Mrs. Maryon and her two younger daughters were keen sighted, much more so than Winifred, and Hertha was assailed with affectionate enquiries as to whether she had a headache, or had she not slept well, etc., etc., which she parried as best she could.

There were two or three letters for her—one, a large, rather thick one, in Mr. Montague's handwriting, she looked at irresolutely, then put it into her pocket unopened.

"It must be in reply to the long letter I sent him two days after I got here," she said to herself. "I am glad he is back in England, but I think I would rather *not* know what he says till after I have spoken to Winifred."

## CHAPTER XI.

### A VICTORY.

THE sun-dial stood on the grass in front of, though at some little distance from, the principal

entrance. For at White Turrets the ground immediately round the house was too much intersected by terraces, and on too many levels to have any great unbroken expanse of lawn. And there Hertha was standing when a few minutes later Winifred joined her.

Even Miss Maryon's short-sighted eyes were struck by her friend's general look and bearing. Hertha was leaning against the old stone, in a tired attitude. She was pale too, and as Winifred drew near she gave a slight shiver.

"Are you cold?" said the girl anxiously, "If you are we can go indoors again at once."

"No thank you, I am not really cold," Miss Norreys replied, "it is only the creeping-together feeling one has after a bad night. When I did fall asleep I slept, I think, *too* heavily. I daresay it is a sort of nervousness. The air and moving about will do me good."

She turned as she spoke, and, followed by Winifred, walked quickly towards the side of the house.

"It is nicest on the terraces," she said, "we can walk up and down and talk quite undisturbed, and always find a seat if we want one."

"Ye-es," said Winifred, lagging a little. "But, dear Miss Norreys, would you mind coming round to the other side, it is so much more cheerful and sunny."

She was unusually deferential and subdued.

"No," said Hertha, with a touch of obstinacy, "I like the shady side best, I am not cold now. That walk with the aspens at the further end is charming. And the others don't like it—it is the haunted walk, isn't it? So I may as well enjoy it while with you, who don't mind nonsense of that kind."

"But I do mind it, though in a different way," said Winifred, "it irritates me more than I can express. I really can hardly tell you how I detest any allusion to that old story."

"Really?" said Hertha, airily. "I think you should be above such feelings. It is inconsistent with your—well your attitude to things in general. Here we are—let us show our defiance of such old wives' tales by marching boldly up and down in the White Weeper's own hunting ground while we have our talk out."

Winifred laughed a little, but constrainedly.

Matter-of-fact as she was, she did not quite understand her friend this morning.

"Of course I don't *really* mind," she said, "if you truly like this side best. And now will you tell me exactly what you have been vexed with me for, and in what way you have come to think less well of me than you used to do?"

Hertha felt somewhat surprised. After all, Winifred was not so dense as appeared. And "to be quite fair on her," thought Miss Norreys, "she *might* have resented my changing to her without giving her my reasons and a chance of justifying herself to some extent."

This reflection came at a good moment. It softened her tone to Winifred.

"Yes," she said, "I will be entirely frank with you, and put before you the whole story of our acquaintance and what I did to help you from my point of view, which is likely, I much fear, to be that of others; and I certainly will not exaggerate things. For," and here a generous impulse made her add warmly, "I *do* trust you, Winifred. I trust your good intentions and your honesty of purpose, though I believe you deceive yourself. And self deception is terribly insidious."

She paused a moment, but the girl did not speak. Hertha glanced round her as if to gather strength and breath for what she had to say. How fair and charming a prospect it was! There was something almost *unreal* in the vivid clearness of the spring beauty all about—unreconcilable with the troubles and anxieties which yet one knew must be there behind it all.

But as Hertha's gaze wandered further, over to where on the other side of some rising ground, the old Church spire rose up into the blue, and the lazily curling smoke of the surrounding homesteads told of the human lives and interests close at hand, different thoughts arose in her mind. What infatuation was over the girl, or woman, beside her? Who could desire a more distinct field of usefulness than Winifred Maryon was deliberately rejecting? The awful problems relating to the poor of our over-crowded great cities must not be shirked by such as are wise enough to grasp them, but how thankful should be those whose duties in smaller spheres are clear and defined, lying among more normal conditions and along less conflicting paths!

She turned to her companion abruptly.

"Winifred, my dear child—my dear friend, if you don't like to be called a child—I *wish* I

understood you, that is at the root of it all. I *cannot* get at your motives, your way of looking at things."

Winifred looked up—a frown, not of annoyance but of perplexity, lining her unusually unruffled forehead: her blue eyes fixed on Hertha's face with a touch of appeal which was almost piteous.

"Tell me," she said, "tell me everything, I do want to know."

And Miss Norreys did as she asked. She went back to the beginning of their acquaintance and told her all, as it had affected her herself, as it had taken shape and colour from her point of view. She spoke as simply as she could, and tried her best to be practical and matter-of-fact. For talking to Winifred was not like talking to Celia, who, young as she was, could take in the sense of a sentence before it was half-expressed, who felt the *spirit* underlying and surrounding even the "commonest" commonplaces of life.

Winifred did not interrupt her, now and then her colour rose a little, once or twice, as Hertha was not sorry to see, she winced, and seemed on the point of bursting out with some exclamation. And then, when Miss Norreys had come to the end of the first part of her story and stopped, the girl looked up.

"Yes," she said, "I see how it must have looked to you, and I see as I certainly did not before, that I was *not* perfectly ingenuous. To a certain extent I deceived you, at least I allowed circumstances to deceive you and others, and I was glad of it, because it suited my purpose. But remember I did not start with any intention of deceiving you, and I thought I had a right to take advantage of the mistake when it arose, because from *my* point of view if my work was worth paying for, I had a right to the payment, don't you see?" and she looked up anxiously.

"Perhaps so, but you had no right to the *position* which alone made your earning payment possible. At least you had no right to obtain it without explaining your circumstances," said Hertha.

Winifred was silent.

"And," Hertha went on, though sorry for the mortification she felt that her words must cause, "to tell the truth, I don't think your work has been exactly worth paying for till now. Everything requires an apprenticeship, part of the

idea of this Society is to give girls who need to earn their livelihood a chance of fitting themselves to do so, by giving them the necessary apprenticeship *gratis*, and more than that, by paying them from the first."

Winifred grew crimson.

"I never thought of that," she said, "I am perfectly ready, indeed I would much rather pay back what they have given me up to this. For I believe my work *is*, or will be from now, worth paying for."

"Very likely," said Hertha, but then she went on to lay the situation in two aspects before Winifred—her own clear home duties, so peculiar and unmistakable; and the wrong of taking advantage of the Society to the prejudice of some other girl in real need of it. The first of these Winifred began by disposing of glibly enough—the work of home was better done by Louise than by herself—better, well not literally better—she knew she had a clearer head for figures, and a more ready grasp of things than her sister. But she was not nearly so patient and sweet-tempered as Louise, she decided complacently: "oh no, not nearly. I should try *papa* awfully."

Hertha stared at her.

"And you would make your own shortcomings an excuse for neglecting duties," she exclaimed. "What sophistry! What a vicious circle you are involving yourself in! Patience and self-control can be acquired. You speak as if your besetting sins belonged to you, like the colour of your eyes or the shape of your nose."

Winifred did not reply.

"And my second point—that of taking what is not meant for you?" Hertha went on.

"That," said Winifred, "is, I think, for the Society to decide. Of course I am now quite ready to tell anything about my circumstances."

In her turn Hertha was silent. She agreed with Winifred that the Society should decide, and she felt considerably inclined to believe that the Society *had* decided. For Mr. Montague's thick letter, though unopened, was in her pocket.

But the conversation was by no means at an end.

"Winifred," said Miss Norreys again, "I have a great deal more to say to you—to tell you. But it would be such a satisfaction to me, and what matters infinitely more, to yourself, afterwards,



always—if you could now, without any further reason, try to see where your real duties lie.”

“I *will* try,” said Winifred, “but,” and at last the tears rose in her eyes, “I did so long for a wider, a fuller life.”

“You cannot have found the petty detail and often wearisome round of work at —— Street, very widening or inspiring, surely?”

“No, but I thought that would come. I was beginning to feel that something *depended* on me, that I had a post—a place. And I like the feeling of ‘London,’ she added, naively.

Hertha smiled.

“Yes,” she said, “I know that, and you may still have it. I think you should be more in London than you have been.”

“There is Celia, too,” exclaimed Winifred.

“I am not forgetting her. But about yourself—you have put it in words. It is *the sense of responsibility* about home duties that has been wanting and has made them unattractive and irksome. That will come, if you set your shoulder to the wheel. You will soon see that, as I do believe is the case, you will be able to do the work better than it has ever been done, and new developments and possibilities would open out. Why, with the experience you have acquired, you might work into the Society’s hands down here—you might have a convalescent home, or a children’s holiday home.”

Winifred’s melancholy face brightened a little.

“I will think about it all,” she repeated, “and I will write anything you like to the Society, or—but I hate troubling you—would not the best thing be for you to write to Mr. Montague? And now, have you told me everything?”

“No,” said Hertha. They were now approaching the end where the aspens stood. Hitherto in their pacing up and down they had not gone so far, but this time Miss Norreys had purposely prolonged their walk a little. “No,” she said, stopping short and looking round her with a strange kind of curiosity, “I have something more to tell you—where does this path go to, or end, Winifred?” she broke off suddenly.

“Oh I don’t know exactly. We never come this way,” the girl replied impatiently. “It goes along among the aspens, and then gets into a tangle. And some way further on there’s a

brook that runs into a pond. It’s a wilderness sort of a place, and I hate it.”

Hertha looked at her.

“Winifred,” she said, “you have a sort of belief in the White Weeper story, otherwise you wouldn’t be so cross about it.”

“I have not, I have not indeed,” said Winifred, earnestly. “But I don’t deny that the association is painful. It is said to have been down here near the pond that the unfortunate woman spent her last night at home before her husband drove her by his cruelty to take refuge in the convent at Cruxfield, where she died. And there is always a creepy shivery feeling about here; the rest of the place is so open and bright.”

She could not repress a slight shudder as she spoke.

“Do come away,” she added.

“Not just for a moment, I want to tell you something here—on the very spot, from where—no, I will begin at the beginning,” said Miss Norreys.

And in a few minutes Winifred was in possession of the whole details of Hertha’s night’s experience.

She grew very pale but listened without a word or gesture of interruption, till the end. Then she burst out.

“Oh surely, surely,” she exclaimed, “it was a dream. It must have been.”

But Hertha shook her head.

“No,” she said, “it was no dream—nothing in the least resembling what we are accustomed to call dreams. A vision it may have been. Perhaps all ghostly visitations are visions. But I was awake when I saw it. I remember her face perfectly. If I were an artist I could paint it.”

“And it has impressed you very much,” said Winifred.

“Naturally.”

“And you have told no one but me—thank you for that. It was good of you, for—of course they would associate it with *me*, with my being here.”

“They could scarcely do otherwise,” said Hertha, drily.

“It is strange,” said Winifred as if thinking aloud. “Why, if such things are, why did she not appear to *me*?”

“Perhaps she cannot. Perhaps you are one

who could not be made conscious of such a presence," said Hertha. "Perhaps ——" but here she stopped, though with a little smile.

"Go on, do," said Winifred.

"I was only going to say—don't think me irreverent, but you are not easily 'convinced against your will,' Winifred. The verse about 'Moses and the prophets' came into my mind. I am not sure that you would give more heed to a ghost than to those who have already spoken."

"Not as much," said Winifred. "But what then has been the use of the poor White Weeper's troubling herself and you about me?"

"To strengthen *my* hands perhaps—in my prophetic capacity, to increase my conviction."

"And what is that?"

"A very strong one. That harm will come of your persistence. Increased trouble and sorrow to others it will certainly cause. Listen, Winifred."

And then she fired her last shot, by revealing to the girl Lennox Maryon's confidence of the previous evening.

Winifred was not pale now. Her cheeks burned, her face grew crimson to the very roots of her hair.

"*Louise!*" she repeated, "*Louise!*"

Hertha felt rather provoked.

"Yes," she said, "*Louise*. Your cousin is heart and soul devoted to her, and what wonder? She is charming and good, and often I almost think her beautiful. You have always under-estimated her."

"Then," said Winifred, without directly replying, "I suppose he never *really* cared for me."

"I am inclined to think he never did," said Hertha. "But surely you should be very glad if it be so? You never cared for him."

"No," said Winifred, "never. But"—and a curious expression came into her face—"I suppose it is very contemptible, but it may be a sort of horrid mortification. I don't know how I feel about it. And yet—oh yes, I do love Louise, and I know she is an angel of goodness, and I'm very fond of Len, in his way. I love them all, but—I'm beginning to see it so plainly. None of them love me. I am out of it all—why was I the eldest? Why can't I go away and make my own way as I planned?"

They were near a bench. Winifred flung herself upon it and burst into uncontrollable girlish

sobs. She seemed to Hertha to have grown ten years younger, and never had Miss Norreys' heart gone out to her so much as now.

For a minute or two she let her cry undisturbed, then she said, very gently,

"My dear child, I think I understand you and the whole story. You have not sought their love in the past as you might have done, but you have it. You do not know how much they all love you. And—you are *very* fortunate—see how duty and affection are pointing the same way in your case. You have it now in your power to win love and gratitude such as fall to the lot of few, by simply doing right."

"If it is right and done for that reason, I don't deserve gratitude," said Winifred, dejectedly.

"*They* will think so, anyway. And it will be a sacrifice of your own wishes to those of others. That should and will bring gratitude."

Winifred sighed deeply.

"I will do it then," she said, "and once I say a thing, I don't go back from it. I will give it up. But, please leave me alone about it for to-day. I will keep out of the way till I am all right again."

They were not far from the house by this time.

"I will run in by one of the side doors, and get to my own room." Winifred went on: "Will you forgive my leaving you here—and—and I want to thank you, but I don't quite know how I feel."

"Never mind about *me*. It is all right as far as I am concerned. I am very thankful," said Hertha.

Winifred was turning away when another thought struck her.

"About Celia," she said. "I did—unselfishly I think—I did want to help her," and the choke in her voice touched Hertha again.

"I know you did, and rightly, and you may take comfort in the thought that it will, after all, have been through you that Celia is to have the opportunities she needs. She is to come to me, to live with me for a time, till, as she expresses it, she can 'test' herself. That is to say, dear Winifred, she can *now* do so. Had you held out, she would never have consented to leave home."

Through Winifred's flushed and tear-stained face her blue eyes looked up at Hertha with perplexity.

"I don't think I yet quite understand your

point of view," she said. "Tell me, is it because you think Celia has special gifts or that I have special calls, that you advise us so differently?"

"Both," Miss Norreys replied.

"But supposing I had had her gifts as well as my calls, what then?"

Hertha hesitated.

"I cannot really say," she replied. "It would have been more difficult to decide. At least it *seems* as if it would have been so. But imaginary positions are not what we have to deal with. And when there are what appear to be almost equally balanced claims upon us, as *sometimes*, though not often, occurs, well, perhaps in such a case it does not matter so very much in the highest sense of all, *which* path we take if we do it heartily and conscientiously. You would not have been left in doubt long, I feel sure, if such had been your case."

"And it is *not*, so we need not trouble about it," said Winifred, practically. "But one thing more, as we have come upon this. Do you think all girls who are not literally forced to earn their bread should stay at home and lead the old routine humdrum lives—I mean of course those who have no great or special gifts? Have you no sympathy with all the feeling of the day about women?"

"The very greatest and deepest," said Hertha. "But it is as immense subject and cannot be treated in wholesale fashion. Individual lives differ so tremendously. All I can say about it roughly is that love of excitement and change and novelty should not be mistaken for real, deliberate desire to make the best and the most of the powers we have. And it should never be forgotten that 'home' is the place we are born into—in a very special sense woman's own kingdom. Outside interests should radiate from and revolve round home—that is the ideal. When home *has* to be given up it should be done regretfully, as a sad necessity, whereas the wish to escape from it is, I fear, in many cases now-a-days, the great motive."

"But girls are not alone to blame for that," said Winifred. "Think what some parents are: tyrannical and selfish, scarcely allowing a daughter to have a mind or a soul of her own."

"I know that some are like that," said Hertha. "If a girl does not marry she is treated as if she had no right to have a self at all! But where

parents are reasonable I doubt if any home life *need* be narrow and stifling and all the rest of it. Monotony is not necessarily an evil. There is immense monotony in all good work, at least in the qualifying oneself for it. I think what makes home life so trying and unsatisfying to so many unmarried women is the want of the sense of responsibility, the not feeling that it really matters except for themselves, whether they are idle and frivolous or not. It is that sense of responsibility which makes even a dull, common-place *married* life attractive. The wife feels herself *somebody*, a centre."

"Yes, I am sure it must be," said Winifred. "But how is it all to be set right? There are so many girls who can't marry now-a-days, they say."

"Well, they must bear it. Cheerful acceptance of evils, irremediable for *us*, though in the long run they may be set right again, is after all a *very* big part of our life's work, is it not? And as to actual, practical work, 'usefulness' in the noblest sense, I have great faith in its coming to those who take at once whatever comes in their way. It is like capital. Money makes money, we are told. Well, I believe that doing work brings work to do. But I did not mean to preach like this."

"I am glad of it. I will think about it," said Winifred, gently.

Then she turned away towards the house, walking slowly, however, for she felt weak and faint from the violent weeping so rare to her. And the sun had been beating on her head more than she realised. Like many English people, Winifred did not know the danger of the spring sun—altogether she felt strangely unlike herself.

And Hertha did not keep her in sight, for she herself moved towards the front in search of a shady spot where she might read Mr. Montague's letter undisturbed.

## CHAPTER XII.

"AFTER ALL THESE YEARS."

MISS NORREYS was standing in the corridor out of which her own room opened, leaning idly against the balusters here surrounding a sort of gallery overlooking the inner hall below, admiring the charming effects of the morning sunshine creeping in at the capriciously placed windows of this part of the

house, lighting up the brasses of the great "dog fire-place," and flecking the well-worn crimson carpet of the shallow-stepped stair-case—a perfect picture of somewhat slumbrous peacefulness. All at once, through the morning quiet and stillness, re-echoing up and down from no direction that she could at once define, came a piercing scream—a scream so utterly at variance with everything around that the startling terror of it was doubled in intensity.

Hertha looked about her, horror-stricken. Then realising that the sound had entirely died away she began to collect herself a little, to hope that it was some trick or folly among the servants, and she was hurrying to the stairs, when again broke out the cry, this time, however, accompanied by wild confused words and the sound of hurrying footsteps. They were hurrying towards her, and in another moment Miss Norreys recognised the voice as Celia's.

"Oh come, come quickly," she was calling. "She is dead. I am sure she is dead."

"Celia," said Hertha, as the girl came flying along wildly, "what *is* the matter?"

For all answer Celia caught her by the arm and dragged her backwards again—across the hall, for by this time Hertha had got to the foot of the staircase—down a side passage to a door leading out to the grounds. And there, just below the few steps leading from the terrace, for even here there were terraces to descend from as in the front, lay the cause of Celia's agonized screams.

It was Winifred, white and unconscious, very, very white, with the half-closed unseeing eyes that make the dearest and best known face look so strange and dreadful.

"Is she dead?" gasped Celia, who was almost as white as her sister.

Hertha had stooped down beside poor Winifred, bending very closely over her.

"Dead," she repeated, looking up, "of course not. My dear Celia, you must have more self-control."

The rather cold seemingly unsympathising words brought the young girl more quickly to herself than anything else could have done, which was Hertha's intention, though in truth at the first moment she had been nearly as terrified as Celia. "Of course not. She has only fainted. Run and fetch Mrs. Grimthorpe—and water—and then perhaps, Louise.

Yes, Louise, tell her quietly so as not to startle her too."

Somewhat hurt, but inexpressibly relieved, Celia rushed off. And in a few minutes the crowd of anxious faces and ready hands was only too great. Miss Norreys dismissed them all, while she and the housekeeper set to work to bring Winifred round again. After a while they succeeded: she shivered and opened her eyes, smiled faintly at Hertha, mentioning something about her head, then seemed to relapse into semi-consciousness again.

"It is more than a common faint," said Hertha, regretfully. "I fear it may have been something of a sunstroke. Poor child, I hope I was not too hard upon her," she added to herself.

Winifred had to be carried into the house, to a bed room, for there were several such at White Turrets, on the ground floor: the doctor sent for, and worst of all, her father and mother told of the catastrophe, a shock which Hertha and Louise would gladly have spared them had it been possible. And for a few hours there was some serious anxiety. But it gradually dispersed. Hertha's idea had been correct: it was a mild case of sunstroke, aggravated, no doubt, by the unusual agitation and emotion that Winifred had gone through that same morning.

By the third day she was much better, though not yet well enough to leave her room. And this was the day on which she was to have returned to London with her friend.

"It is rather too bad—don't you think so?" she said to Hertha, "that when I *had* given in I should be tied by the leg like this, literally"—for in her fall one ankle had been sprained. "It seems to take away all the—the credit of it, as it were," she went on, with a rueful smile.

"No, dear, it does not. They all know—your parents and your sisters, and," with a glance round to make sure that no one could hear, "your cousin. They all know what you had resolved, and as soon as you are well enough to talk more you will see what they feel about it," Hertha replied.

A gleam of bright pleasure crossed Winifred's pale face.

"Still," she said, "does it not a little destroy your faith in our guardian ghost as you choose to consider her? If I had been standing out about it, determined not to give in, she might have tried

something of the kind, but as I had given in——”

Her tone puzzled Miss Norreys.

“You don’t mean to say that the White Weeper had anything to do with your fainting-fit, your fall?” she said.

“N—no,” replied Winifred. “But if she is really so concerned about us all, about me in particular, she might have prevented it somehow, don’t you think?”

Her tone of matter-of-fact discussion of the subject was almost amusing. Winifred would always be Winifred!

“As things have turned out, I scarcely see that the catastrophe affects you or the whole question very much one way or the other,” said Miss Norreys, “except that, Winifred, it must show you how mistaken you have been in thinking you are not deeply cared for and loved.”

“Yes,” said Winifred, flushing a little, “it may have been to show me that.” Then, after a little pause, “practically, it only affects me in this way that I had made up my mind to go back to London with you to do my work for a week or two—for nothing, of course,” and here she grew still more flushed, “till they replace me. And I wanted to collect my things and to say goodbye to two or three people—the people where I lodged, amongst them. I have been so interested in them—in the two poor daughters—the father and mother are dreadful people, very often intoxicated,” she added, calmly.

“My dear Winifred! And the Society recommended such a place for a young girl to live at,” exclaimed Hertha, aghast.

“Oh dear no, I found it out for myself. And I am not a young girl. I was able to be of great use to them. But for me there would have been an execution in the house ever so long ago.”

And then some allusion in Mr. Montague’s letter—which, in her newborn anxiety to spare Winifred further mortification, Hertha had determined she should never see, recurred to Miss Norreys’ mind. “It appears she has even set the Society’s rules at defiance with regard to her lodgings.” She understood the sentence now!

“I can do any commissions that need to be done for you. I have arranged now to stay till the day after to-morrow, and you will be able to tell me all by then,” she said quietly, thinking in her own mind that it was probably very well that

Winifred was not to return to her self-chosen quarters at all. “The White Weeper must have been very wise not to have prevented the accident, even supposing she could have done so,” she thought to herself, while half laughing at her own fancifulness. But the idea suggested a question.

“What did make you fall, I wonder?” she said. “Do you think you fainted first, or that the shock of the fall made you faint?”

“I don’t know,” said Winifred. “It was very strange. I was dizzy—that was the sunstroke, I suppose. But I might have had a slight sunstroke without either falling or fainting. I have never fainted before, so I don’t know anything about it. But it was very strange. I felt dizzy, as I said, and I was going up the terrace steps—it was *the* terrace you know, that runs on to the aspens—when all at once I became icy cold, not cold in myself, but as if something outside me, something coming *to* me had made me cold. It was so startling, so extraordinary that the shock seemed to paralyze me—I felt myself going, and then I must have fallen. The next thing I remember is your face looking at me.”

“It is strange,” said Hertha, “but I do not know much about fainting either.”

“You see,” said Winifred, naïvely, “I don’t think in all my life before I had ever cried so violently, or—or felt so—so unlike myself.”

“No,” agreed Hertha. And in her own mind she said that there are certainly “more things” close about us, than we dream of. Who could say if the awakening of Winifred’s finer and more perceptive nature might not have begun?

Two days later Miss Norreys found herself in the train on her return journey to London.

Mr. Montague’s letter—the letter which Hertha had refrained from reading before her talk with Winifred—had contained matter which would have been sorely mortifying to the heiress of White Turrets. The Society among whose workers she had for a short time been enrolled had decided on dismissing her, feeling naturally indignant at the deception which its heads considered had been put upon them. Mr. Montague was, of course, exonerated from all intentional collusion, but his position in the matter was unpleasant, and but for his firm and steady regard for Hertha, he might have visited on her some of his annoyance.

"Nor could I have resented it if he had done so," thought Miss Norreys.

But Mr. Montague had behaved well and unselfishly. All he could do he had done, and that had been to obtain a promise that if Miss Maryon at once sent in her resignation it would be accepted in lieu of a dismissal.

"They are by no means sorry to be free of her," he wrote, "for though a clever girl in several ways, her self-will and defiance of authority were impossible to stand, coupled as they were with complete inexperience and reluctance to ask or take advice." And then followed the remark already quoted about Winifred's change of quarters.

Hertha sighed.

"I do feel terribly sorry to have involved Mr. Montague so uncomfortably," she said, "even now I feel as if I could shake Winifred with pleasure."

She took the letter out of her bag to read it again. She did not own to herself that in the postscript—for there was a postscript—lay its greatest interest. Yet her eyes dwelt on the two or three lines as if they would read in them more, far more, than was there.

"I think I must tell you," wrote her old friend, "that at last, after all these years, I have heard from Austin. He writes cheerfully and hopes to be able to return home for good next autumn. He is not married."

But Hertha folded the page and replaced the letter resolutely in the envelope.

"No," she said to herself, "I must not think of him at all. After all these years, as Mr. Montague says, it would be worse than folly, utter madness to risk re-opening the old wounds."

And Hertha knew how to use a mental lock and key.

Still—all through the weeks and months that followed, through the fatigue and not unfrequent trials and annoyances of her own almost overwhelmingly busy life, through her newly awakened interest in and friendship for the family at White Turrets, through *everything*, there ran like the rippling of an all but inaudible brook in the summer time, a little unacknowledged refrain of gladness, of hope. And the words which were set to this fairy music were always the same. "Austin is coming home for good next autumn. He is not married."

Celia, pretty Celia, as Hertha called her to herself, joined Miss Norreys before long as arranged. She was so entirely in earnest, so forgetful of self in her work, so grateful for the advantages she owed in considerable measure to her friend, that she seemed never in the way. She had of course many difficulties to contend with, for even genius cannot walk along a royal road for many steps together; then come the rough bits, the flat, dull, monotonous stretches when one seems to be making no way, and worst, yet best of all perhaps, the ever increasing consciousness of falling short of one's ever ascending ideal.

But by degrees the great fact came to be incontestable—the genius was there.

And Winifred for her part kept her promise man—or woman-fully. She had not boasted in saying she was not one to do things by halves. She set her shoulder to the wheel of the duties she had never before taken any real interest in. There came up to Celia now and then lists of appallingly clever books on eminently practical subjects, all directly or indirectly connected with the management on the best possible lines of a large estate.

And when Celia returned to London again after a happy Christmas tide at White Turrets the following winter, her report was most encouraging.

"I cannot tell you how well Winifred is getting on," she said, "and how excellently she does everything. And with her as his more than right hand papa seems a different being. She really *is* very clever."

"I am sure of it," Miss Norreys replied, warmly.

"And the queer thing is that though she has never been so useful in her life, she is so much less self-confident," said Celia. "She is, oh, so *much* softer and more sympathising."

"I think that is natural. She is no longer at war with herself, and unconsciously on the defensive," replied the elder woman.

"But is it not delightful to you to think that it is really all *your* doing, dear Hertha?" asked Celia.

Hertha smiled.

"I do not feel that it was," she said. "At least my hands were strengthened very strangely. I—Celia," she broke off abruptly, "I want to ask

you something. Has the White Weeper been heard of or seen of late?"

"No, I believe not once," said Celia in surprise. Hertha bent her head in sign of satisfaction.

"I thought so," she said. "Celia," she went on, "I think I will tell you now what I have never told anyone but Winifred."

And she related the story of her strange experience that moonlight night at White Turrets.

Celia listened breathlessly, her face growing a shade paler.

"How extraordinary, *how* strange!" she exclaimed. "And you think Winifred was really influenced by it?"

"At least she did not mock at it—not in the very slightest," said Hertha. "And—there was something more, that day she fainted, you remember?"

"Yes," said Celia.

"Did she never tell you what she had felt?" And Hertha repeated what Winifred had told her. Celia shook her head.

"No," she never told me. She knows I have always been so frightened about it. But—I scarcely see why she came, or tried to come, to Winifred herself, when the point *was* gained and she had given in?"

"Ah—I must tell you the rest, and this I think impressed your sister most of all. A day or two after I returned to London, after that Easter time—I went, at her request, to collect her things and pay some money *she* thought due to the people she had lodged with. What do you think I found? A deserted house—in the possession of the police. There had been a fire the night but one before, caused no doubt by the people themselves, for they were a very undesirable lot. They had all escaped however, as they lived below, but the upper rooms, the very rooms Winifred had had, were literally gutted—in a state of black charred desolation. We cannot say of course, but when I explained my errand, the policeman said the lady should be thankful that she had been prevented returning. 'Ten to one if she could have been got out alive,' she said."

"Oh, Hertha!" exclaimed Celia, horror-struck. "And you told Winifred?"

"Yes, though not immediately. She was still ill when it happened. But I think it impressed her exceedingly. Still, as she has not told you about it, it may be as well never to mention it."

"I will never do so," said Celia. "But I think I shall never feel *afraid* of the White Weeper again."

Then she went on to tell her friend about Louise and Lennox in their own house—their marriage having taken place the preceding autumn.

"They are as happy as the good people in a fairy-tale," she said.

When Celia went home the next time—a little more than a year after she had joined Miss Norreys, she took with her an astonishing piece of news. Hertha, Winifred's typical, self-dependent woman, *Hertha*, was going to be married!

"It is an old story," said Celia, calmly. "An old story ending very beautifully, I think. I cannot tell you much, for I do not know the whole. But they were separated for years, through nobody's fault exactly—and neither has ever cared for anyone else," she added, simply.

"All the same," said Winifred, "I am just a *little* disappointed in her,"

Celia's own plans were not materially affected by this unexpected event, as having by this time gathered experience she was able to go on with her studies without actually sharing her friend's home. Before long, those studies led her further a-field for a time. But this sketch or rough outline, rather—not worthy of the name of a story—of some girls' experiences, must come to an end without chronicling the successes of the young painter, of whom great things are prophesied.

There *are* those, too, who predict that Celia Maryon is about to try the experiment of reconciling the claims and duties of married life with those of a special vocation. And if it be possible to succeed in so doing, assuredly no woman could have a wiser, less exacting, and more sympathising husband than the one whom rumour has selected for her—Eric Balderson.

## THINGS IN GENERAL.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

ST. SWITHIN has had his way, or nearly so, this year. When the rain fell in buckets on the fifteenth of July, we knew, or ought to have known, our fate. It would be a new thing in the pictorial legends of the saints to represent this one in whatever fashion of waterproof there may have been in his day—and an umbrella. But in St. Swithin's day, which we should like to define to a century or two, an umbrella was not a shelter from rain, but a sign of sovereignty, so as he was, we think, nothing more than a bishop, it is not like that so noble a symbol would have fallen to his share. It would be a good but easy study for the Reading Union, which finds out so many recondite things—which I should not like to be called on to find out—to let us know a little about St. Swithin. The legends of the saints are fascinating reading. They are as good as fairy tales, and of course a great deal better, seeing the admirable motive that lies under all their records. Many of these, however, have not very much connection with our modern life, not much more than the fairy princesses: but here is one who exercises a yearly influence. What put it into his saintly head to interfere in the management of the elements during these six weeks which ought to be the most radiant of the summer? Is there any way in which we can speak him fair and avert his activity for next year? Here is a subject for an essay, historical, speculative, fanciful, which might exercise a pretty wit in a beneficial way. I will willingly give a *Golden Treasury*—which is my favourite present for girls—to any one who will make out this story about St. Swithin in a satisfactory way: especially in respect to the last particular stated. The facts will no doubt be found in the volume of the *Acta Sanctorum* for July, the fifteenth of that month, written, not in choice but in monkish Latin, with every miraculous circumstance well sifted and carefully examined. Other saints, we believe, in other regions are credited with the same power over the weather. Why should they have taken so much trouble? Perhaps it is one of those survivals of the unfittest which are so common—the saint being eastern no doubt, and deeply impressed with the advantage of forty days' rain to his own sandy and arid land, without thinking, as a saint ought to have done, of the consequences to other countries which

stood very little in need of it—thereby incurring a responsibility which we should be sorry to characterise as it deserves. And lo, though his name and fame be gone, his influence survives. How many a pleasant party he has spoiled, how many a pretty gown! He has ruined the picnics, made the garden parties a snare and delusion, and swept away the school treats. He might have been a benefactor to Egypt or Syria, or any other district in which deserts abound, but we certainly have had more than enough of him here.

One thing is certain, that St. Swithin and St. Lubbock cannot exist under the same firmament. We ought to have abolished the one when we established the other. As it is, the modern cannot be described as anything but an unlucky saint—as perhaps a saint who chooses his own festival might expect to be. But indeed the date could scarcely be helped, granting all the attendant circumstances, Christmas and Easter and Whitsunday being, as it were, bespoken and the only chance for an effective holiday, lying in the late summer or early autumn. But we think that the feast of St. Lubbock might well, like some of higher import, be made a moveable feast. When St. Swithin comes out to the door of the weather-house as master of the situation, his modern brother should retire within, and the Bank holiday should be the first of September. Then no antagonism need be in the skies. St. Swithin, having had his time, would have rained himself out and gone, and then might be the star of Lubbock arise and sign.

But enough of this meteorological mythology. It seems only the other day that we were discoursing upon the beginning of the season, and now it is over: and not much advance made, we fear, in many things in this world, where progress is so slow, and where everything seems to work round and round, with so much rushing of the wheels and beating of the wings, to reach the same point again as that from which we started. Happily it is the old and not the young who feel this most. I do not feel inclined to say with the Preacher that all is vanity. I am not sure that this strange incompleteness, this sensation of a never-ending, still-beginning career—even the consciousness of the very little we ever accomplish in comparison with the aims and the hopes of the outset—is not one of the most characteristic



things in this world, in which we are always told that it is not our business to content ourselves but to look forward to something better to come. Would it not be a life more limited, and far less splendid, if we were more easily satisfied and ready to accept our work as good, and worth having lived for, as so few do now? Was life worth living? was a fashionable question a little while ago, but it is at once a more subtle and a more searching question to ask if our work which we do, and our purposes which we accomplish, are worth having lived for? To the first question every rational creature will answer, "Yes," without hesitating. Life is best: to live, even if there is as much pain as of pleasure in it. The inanimate is nothing, and to be nothing can be the wish of no one who is not a fool. But to the other question the answer is different: very few are they whose life—with all its wonderful and miraculous circumstances—is justified by the use they have made of it or is repaid to the Giver by what they do. There is better than that in the meanest existence. There is something to come which is our compensation, our consolation, the still-remaining hope. Our incompleteness is of our very nature. Were the threads fairly wound up, the intentions all fulfilled, the plans accomplished with the years, the piece of work all fully done to the last corner, no flaws or failures in it, what would remain but to write the "Finis," to extinguish the lamps and ring out the performers, and be finally done and over? But that is what never happens to any one of us. There is the most pathetic passage to this effect in a book which is one of the most beautiful books of this new generation of writers, the *Window in Thrums*. The reader will find there an old weaver who is going to die, and on his last night of life wakes up and bethinks him that he is leaving his old wife behind, how poorly provided for! The old man rises from his deathbed and lights his candle, and goes out to his loom to weave out his last web, which will be something at least for her. He begins again, on the verge of death, and is found lying dead upon the loom in which he had tried, with chilled hands, to work a dower for his widow—a few shillings to be left behind, out of the very midnight and mirk of death. Thus life goes on: the web is never woven out: the sensation of ending rarely comes to us. We go on with our projects and intentions to the very

verge. I know an old lady of ninety who still talks of what is to be done next summer, as if she were seventeen. In short, though we know that everybody dies and that the conclusion of every human life is inevitable, each one of us has a secret conviction that, somehow, for us the rule will be abrogated or suspended, and that we shall go on, and form our plans, and weave our webs, and make up for all our failures, even at the last moment. Thus the circles multiply and interweave each other, and bring us back most of them very nearly to where we started: but our chief circle, the round of true life, projects into the shadows beyond, and is never complete.

This is what Tennyson meant when he asked for his wages, from the Eternal Master—"Only the wages of going on, and still to be." Life always, whatever it is, to be, being ever nobler, greater, more worth having than not to be; and with it this human privilege or penalty whichever we call it of never ending anything—of leaving hopeful threads all over the world, pathetically imperfect, often the most sad to our perception of earthly things—yet reaching on, linking on, to who knows what extending possibilities, and higher methods and purposes more complete. There is nothing that is really sad except an End.

Autumn is the season of ending, however, and we have now come to it again in the round of the seasons which are never done. But with what innumerable glories and triumphs she pranks it out to make believe that it is no end at all! which of course it is not except in appearance, considering all the numberless seeds and promises for the future, which September drops as he strides along, cutting down, you would say, everything that August has left wherever he goes. The promises, what bushels of them! and these are what concern the young people most. What are we going to do next? when the corn is gathered in and the kindly fruits of the earth have been secured for the year, that is always the question. It is the very life-breath of humanity. We shall do—not a very great deal perhaps: but let us mean to do everything that is best and loveliest, and of the most good report. And so we shall go round with the year, and in time attain to those other conditions in which all our noblest meanings may be carried out.

## ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (AUG.)

I.

1. A Collie and a Newfoundland. 2. *The Two Dogs*, by Burns.

II.

*Ulalume*, by E. A. Poe ; *A Dream within a Dream*, *ibid.* ; Milton's *Lycidas*,

III.

1. The Veneerings. 2. Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*.

IV.

1. Chamberlain, in *Lalla Rookh*. 2. The Renegade (Siege of Corinth). 3. The lady to whom Shelley addressed his *Epipsychidion*. 4. *The Rhymer* (see Scott's Ballad).

V.

George Herbert (*The Temple*).

VI.

1. Sir Richard Grenville. 2. Tennyson's *The Revenge*.

VII.

1. Madame de Staël : Camille Desmoulins ; Madame Roland. 2. Carlyle's French Revolution.

VIII.

1. *On Chapman's Homer ; On the Elgin Marbles ; Bright Star*. 2. John Keats.

## SEARCH QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

I.

1. Who was Adam Bell ?  
2. By which great poet is reference made to him, and in what work ?

1. Who speaks these lines ?—

“———Her purblind son and heir,  
Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim  
When King Cophetua loved the beggar-maid.”

2. Give author and work.

III.

Give poems from which the following quotations are made :—

“ Disposed to wed, e'en while you hasten, stay ;  
There's great advantage in a small delay.”

“ Timid was Isaac, and in all the past  
He felt a purpose to be kind at last.”

“ Or Law with lawyers is an ample still,  
Wrought by the passion's heat with chymic skill.”

IV.

1. What is the allusion in these lines ?—

“———Yet much remains  
To conquer still : peace hath her victories  
No less renowned than war ; new foes arise,  
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains.”

2. Give source and author.

V.

1. Who is referred to in these words ?—

V.

George Herbert (*The Temple*).

VI.

1. Sir Richard Grenville. 2. Tennyson's *The Revenge*.

VII.

1. Madame de Staël : Camille Desmoulins ; Madame Roland. 2. Carlyle's French Revolution.

VIII.

1. *On Chapman's Homer ; On the Elgin Marbles ; Bright Star*. 2. John Keats.

“ He heard voices from heaven ; he saw strange visions of distant hills, pleasant and sunny as his own Delectable Mountains : from those abodes he was shut out and placed in a dark and horrible wilderness, where he wandered through ice and snow, striving to make his way into the happy region of light.”

2. Give source.

VI.

1. Where is this couplet taken from ?—

“ And weary as that bird of Thrace,  
Whose pinion knows no resting place.”

2. Give poem and author.

VII.

1. What is the allusion in these lines ?—

“ Such freedom is—and Windsor's hoary towers  
Stood trembling at the boldness of thy powers,  
That won a nymph on that immortal plain.”

2. Give poem and author.

VIII.

1. Give source of following quotations :—

“———In lone and silent hours,  
When night makes a weird sound of its own stillness.”

“ We two will sink on the wide waves of ruin,  
Even as a vulture and a snake outspent  
Drop, twisted in inextricable fight,  
Into a shoreless sea.”

“ Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thoughts.”

2. By whom are they written.

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